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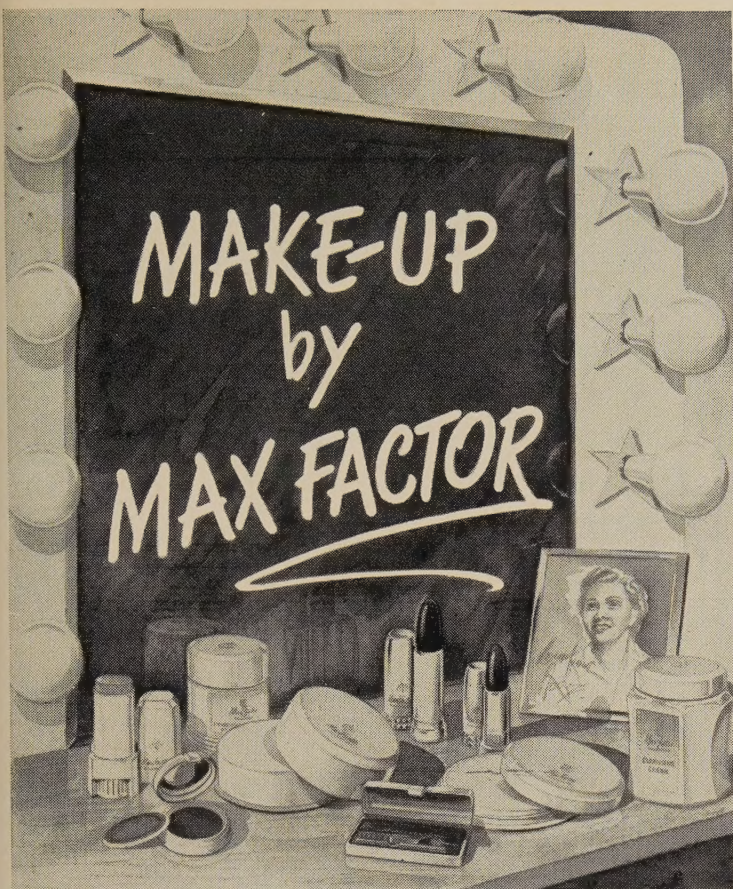
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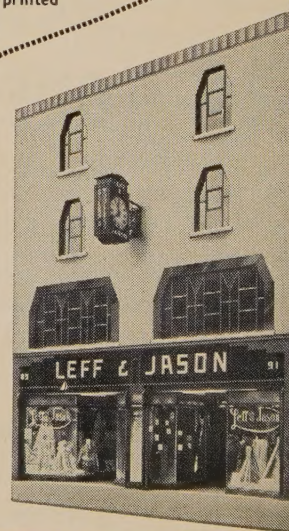
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**RUDOLF AND JOAN BENESH** Reason: For having quietly developed a new system of movement notation over the past eight years which has now been adopted by Sadler's Wells.

SINCE Thoinot Arbeau published his system of dance notation over 400 years ago, many other systems have been invented. But none has had such an auspicious launching as the new Benesh System of Movement Notation which, on its introduction, has been adopted for use by the entire Sadler's Wells organisation.

It was devised by Rudolf Benesh, a portrait painter by profession, and his wife, the Sadler's Wells soloist Joan Benesh. Work on the new system was begun about eight years ago, before they were married.

Joan, who was then working in the commercial theatre, wanted some kind of notation to assist her with choreography. Rudolf thought the production of such a notation possible and so the collaboration started.

The basic principles of the new system were settled six years ago, but although even then workable it needed a polishing that took a further four years. Information about the system slowly percolated around dance circles, particularly Sadler's Wells, where, of course, Joan was a soloist. In January of this year Margot Fonteyn, in her capacity of President of the Royal Academy of Dancing, invited the Benesh couple to put their system to the test of public demonstration. This took place in front of Dame Ninette de Valois and others, and proved a riotous success, the immediate result of which was the system's adoption by the Wells Organisation.

A firm, Benesh Choreographics Ltd., has been founded to distribute a postal course (to which many well-known dancers are already subscribing) and Rudolf and Joan Benesh are lecturing at the Wells School and other major ballet schools. Future developments contemplated include the publication of a primer, and eventually the publication of the dance scripts of numerous ballets, probably in two editions, one for the professional dancer, the other simplified for use by the ordinary ballet-goer.

Final judgment on the system's merits must be suspended for some years, until it has proved itself in use. If it lives up to its expectations it may inaugurate an entirely new period of ballet history.

(An explanation of the Benesh System of Movement Notation will be found in John Gregory's article on page 14 of this issue).

## Dance and Dancers

Editor: PETER WILLIAMS

Assistant Editor: CLIVE A. BARNES

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### Never too old

THE blue smoke of bonfires, the chill in the air, the sudden instinct that the time for overcoats is approaching, and autumn is with us. After the excitements of high summer, autumn seems somehow restful, a time of quiet preparation against the storms of winter.

A dancer's career much resembles the cycle of the seasons; and in most countries where national companies have a long tradition, the autumn and winter of a dancer's career are respected as much as the spring and summer, and necessary provision is made for these seasons.

Unfortunately, many countries—and England is one of the worst offenders in this respect—hardly remember that a dancer exists after his or her most energetic dancing days are over. Eternal shame on us!

Ballets are not peopled solely by characters who have not reached their thirty-fifth year. How indescribably boring they would be if they were! Mothers, fathers, nannies, old ogres and the rest have to play their invaluable parts in the proceedings, yet we see fit to place such roles in the inexperienced hands of unconvincingly made-up youths and unwrinkled girls. Thus we rob our ballets of a great deal of conviction.

But even worse than that, we shut out those experienced artists whose mature artistry, gained only through many years in the theatre, has so much to offer to the younger generation. We fail to employ them, we seek not their counsel, and then we wonder why so much of what we see upon the stage is but an empty shadow of what it might be.

Admittedly, things are better than they were. Few people who saw it will ever forget Madame Evina's Mother in the late International Ballet's *Giselle*. And how much better are those scenes in the Sadler's Wells repertoire in which Pamela May lends her noble dignity to regal roles! Thank heavens the authorities have seen fit to consult the Grigorieffs or Karsavina when reviving ballets from the Diaghilev repertoire.

These are encouraging signs, but the general acceptance of mature experience is not widespread, in England or in America.

There are still among us many dancers and teachers who had the opportunity of working with the great ones of past decades. Many of them would only be too happy to pass on their knowledge to the present generation. Perhaps a little guidance from them might make all the difference in helping to prevent this so-called golden age of ballet from changing, before we are fully aware of it, into an age of lead.

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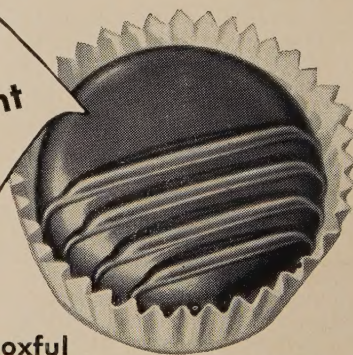
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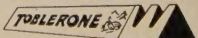
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**ACROBATICS ABOUNDING:** (Above and below) Dancers leaping and tumbling in *The Fortress of Yentanchan*.



NEXT year the Sadler's Wells Ballet celebrates its 25 years of existence, this year the Pekin Opera will have been going for 1,241 years. Thus the theatre in Cathay was well established when the British were still cavorting in woad.

But although the theatre was born in Peking in the middle of the eight century, when short plays on comic or satirical themes about the prominent personages of the time were given, it was not until the 12th or 13th centuries that a real theatrical form was evolved. It became an art in which acting, movement, music and the decorative arts were combined.

## AUTUMN VISITORS: I

The company which London will see at the Palace Theatre represents a fusion of two celebrated groups—the Pekin Opera and the Liaoning Theatre. The name they have adopted, the Classical Theatre of China, gives little idea of what this remarkable entertainment amounts to. As in Japan, the works in their entirety last many hours, sometimes days. This company, like the Azuma Kabuki company recently seen at Covent Garden, have chosen extracts from these epics to show the characteristics of their refined art to a Western audience. Audiences will find little resemblance between the theatre arts of the two oriental countries.

One of the most surprising revelations to Europeans has been the great speed and acrobatic virtuosity of these Chinese artists. By means of rhythmic movement, performed with remarkable control: the artists convey the thoughts and feelings of the various characters. The flashing turns, daring leaps and feats of prowess, of which the pictures



**MONKEY KING:** Wang Ming-chung as the Souen Wou-kong (the King of the Monkeys) who is opposed by divinities in *Disturbances in the Kingdom of Heaven*.

Photo: Pic (Paris)

on this page give some slight idea, are the most spectacular aspects of a complex technique perfected through the ages.

Paris and other cities of Europe have acclaimed the visit of the Classical Theatre of China as a most important artistic event. Some critics have gone so far as to compare the impact of this company with that of the Diaghilev ballet when it first came to the Châtelet Theatre. There can be no doubt that the company from Peking will open up new vistas of movement and decoration from which our choreographers and designers should profit.

This month's front cover picture, by Pic (Paris), is of Chang Chun-hua and Chang Shih-tung in *The Fight in the Dark*, now one of the most famous numbers to be given by The Classical Theatre of China.

**FIGHT IN THE DARK:** Chang Chun-hua in another moment from *The Fight in the Dark*. Photos: Pic (Paris)





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*FROM THE UKRAINE: A dancer in the Ukrainian Hopak in which the male leaps high over the heads of the chorus. This is one of the many regional dances which Moisseyev has collected in his travels across the USSR.*



*FOOTBALL POLKA: A love of games, such as football, is inherent in the lives of the Russian peoples. As well as using folklore as the basis for his dance creations, Moisseyev also reflects the work and pleasures of contemporary life.*

## Folklore alive and kicking

Folklore and daily life have been used by Igor Moisseyev in forming his **MOISSEYEV ENSEMBLE** from Moscow. London sees this company for the first time when it opens on November 8 at the Princes Theatre for a four-week season.

**I**GOR MOISSEYEV founded the company which bears his name in Moscow some 18 years ago. He drew his dancers from both amateur and professional groups, thus mingling the exuberance and spontaneity of the one with the training and sense of tradition of the other. Folk dances of the USSR were used as the basis for the choreography of this group which reflects in the dance, the history, folklore and contemporary life of the people.

In the beginning, the group consisted of 30 dancers and a small orchestra of musicians. Today the company in Moscow consists of some 100 dancers and a group of 45 musicians. The performers include Russians, Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians, Usbeks, Tajiks and Finns.

### Inspired by birds and beasts

Moisseyev has made an exhaustive study of folk dance all over Russia and, much in the same way as Katherine Dunham studied the Negro dances and folklore of the world, he has translated the village green to the stage of the theatre. He learned from the hunter's observations of birds and beasts, from the far Northerner's imitations of raven, seal and reindeer, and from the mountain dweller's idea of an eagle's flight and mortal combat with its enemies.

He also learned from the varying romantic approach between man and woman all over Russia. In Georgia, for instance, the *Kartuli* expresses a lofty attitude on the part of the male towards the female of his choice. Not even in the dance does he dare

to touch her. In many Russian dances the girl allures the youth with smiles, grace of movement and the aloofness of her carriage.

### AUTUMN VISITORS: 2

But Moisseyev fervently believed that the dance should also be international and during his tours with his troupe he has made use of elements of the dances of other countries—China, Poland and Lithuania are but a few. He has welded all this material into one of the most remarkable manifestations of the dance art of the people to be found anywhere in the world today. He believes that the dance is a dynamic and constantly changing phenomenon. Thus the constantly changing character of the people and their temperamental peculiarities of their costume and daily life, is all reflected in the repertoire he has created.

In Moscow, the troupe has its own school where every member of the company attends each morning, taking a class in classical ballet as well as in character dancing. They also receive a general education at secondary school standard, in addition to instruction in choreography, folklore, music and costume.

These classes are followed by group and mass rehearsals, and in the evenings, when the company is not performing, there are solo rehearsals to prepare dancers for new roles they will eventually take over in the general repertoire. The group is therefore far from being a static one relying solely

on the traditions of the past. It respects the past, but it also creates works for the present which will in turn establish a tradition for the future.

Mainly as a result of the work of this group, many regions and republics in the Soviet Union now have their own national dance and song ensembles. In England many people have seen and admired the dances from Uzbekistan performed here by soloists from the company in Tashkent, which is similar to the Moscow group in that it uses its national background as a basis for its repertoire. There are also important groups in the Ukraine, Moldavia, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Karelia.

### Benefits of exchange

From 1944, when Moisseyev prepared his first programme of Dances of Slavonic Peoples, the group has made extensive tours, developing an exchange of dance art which has been of enormous benefit to itself and those it has visited.

The folk dance combines talented improvisation with National tradition, so as soon as the Moisseyev group discovers the essence of any dance, whether intellectual or emotional, they try to heighten its expressiveness by either stressing the plot, or its character and feeling. To do this they make use of all available artistic resources: drama, floor pattern, dance technique, music and costumes. This approach is what makes for good theatre.

The first appearance of this company in London is more than just a welcome introduction to some distinguished visitors. It should also be the yardstick by which we can assess the work of all similar groups. The Moisseyev Ensemble may even suggest to us means of turning our own national heritage into magnificent theatre instead of the unsatisfactory reproduction of our folk dances attempted in the past fit only to amuse locals on a summer evening on the village green.

# Dancers from Spain



PILAR LOPEZ: Returns to London this month. The back-cover action picture of her, and this portrait, are by Ibanez, Madrid.

WHEN Ballet Español comes to the Palace Theatre on November 14, for a four-week season, British audiences will again experience the artistry of Pilar Lopez. Two sisters—Encarnacion and Pilar—

daughters of a Castilian exporter, have been mainly responsible for the form taken by the Spanish dance in the contemporary theatre.

Encarnacion, (known to the world as La Argentinita) was, from childhood until she died in New York in 1945, one of the most popular artists in Spain. Her friendship with

## AUTUMN VISITORS. 3

the poet and playwright, Garcia Lorca, led to the formation of the Madrid Ballet in 1932. Most of the greatest gypsy dancers of our time appeared with this company. Gradually the younger sister, Pilar, prepared to follow in the steps of her famous sister.

By the middle 'thirties, Pilar was ready to take her place with her sister. With groups of other Spanish dancers, they made triumphant tours of America and Europe as the Ballet Español.

Pilar adored her sister and after La Argentinita's death, the Ballet Español disbanded. However, as a memorial to her sister, Pilar formed a new company in 1946 in Madrid, which has continued ever since.

The great taste, knowledge and intelligence which made La Argentinita a unique Spanish artist, has been handed on to Pilar. Almost every one of the best numbers given today by so many Spanish companies is but a carbon copy, often a very dim one, of the work created by the sisters Lopez.



NEW LEAD: Paco de Ronda who now heads the male contingent of Ballet Español. Photo: Ibanez

## RAMBERT'S LINKS WITH FRANCE

Throughout its history, Ballet Rambert has reflected in its repertoire the admiration of Marie Rambert for all things French. Tony Mayer, of the Cultural Department of the French Embassy in London, writes about Rambert's work as an "unofficial ambassador of French culture," and of the French dancers who have studied with her.

by

TONY  
MAYER

A YOUNG Russian dancer, Mlle. Myriam Rambert\*, made her first appearance yesterday at the Theatre Imperial, and immediately captured her audience. . . . She dances with a passion both fervid and bold." "This very young dancer possesses an art which is very accomplished and yet very instinctive." The place and the date: Paris, June 1914; the papers: *Le Temps* (now *Le Monde*) and *l'Intransigeant*.

A couple of months later the first world war was due to break out and Marie Rambert (as she had become) left her beloved Paris for Britain, a country as yet unfamiliar to her. Since leaving her native Poland, had spent most of her time in Paris. She had arrived there in 1905 to stay with her aunt Mme. Pierrot who, with her two daughters Henriette and Cécile, lived in a very bourgeois flat in the Quartier des Archives. Her family did not want Mim to be a professional dancer. So she started studies at the Sorbonne and would no doubt have become by now a famous doctor (just as her cousins are respectively a teacher at the Collège Sévigné and a sub-editor of the

magazine *Elle*), had not the call of ballet been the stronger and she had not given up medicine for the dancing profession.

In France she studied with two teachers from the Opéra, Mlle. Chasles and Mme. Rat (Rat!—too good to be true). She gave recitals (at one of them she improvised a dance while Saint-Saëns played the piano—but not *The Swan*, says Mim). She also met many writers, painters, artists, and, incidentally, learned whole plays of Molière, Racine, Corneille by heart which she still can recite between two cartwheels. "Mademoiselle Rambert, c'qu'elle est cleveur, c'qu'elle est cleveur" used to say Mlle. Lhonnore, who at the time was making Mim's dresses for the stage.

She left Paris in 1914. But France had become part of her and has remained with her ever since. "How much I learned from the French and how happily I have shared it with my English pupils" says Mim, as dressed in her pink blouse and brown slacks ("mon costume de travail"), lying, sitting, moving about her heavily panelled and curtained dining room she recalls the past. She hands me an 18-years-old programme: "In 1937, the *Ballet Anglais de Marie Rambert* made its first tour in France, to Biarritz, Vichy (we were the first to go there after Diaghilev), and to so many places I forget. Look at our repertoire, 30 ballets already, amongst which even then: *Bar aux Folies-Bergère* (after Manet),

*Foyer de Danse* (after Degas), and. . . . *Façade!*".

In 1950 Mme. Rambert captured Paris once again. But this time at the Sarah Bernhardt. And impressive was by then the list of French composers whose music she had had in her repertoire: Adam (*Giselle*), Chabrier (*Bar aux Folies-Bergère*), Chausson (*Jardin aux Lilas*), Dukas (*La Péri*), Fauré (*La Fête Etrange*), Grovlez (*The Tale of a Lamb*), Lekeu (*Un Songe*), Milhaud (*Circus Wings*), Poulenc (*Paris-Soir* and *Les Masques*), Satie (*Mercure*), De Severac (*La Muse s'Amuse*), and of course Debussy (*L'Après-midi d'un Faune*). When Babilée danced the Faun in 1950 at the Empress Hall, it was Mim who rehearsed it with him.

To bring French music to the English, and to bring her training to the French—only Mim could have done it. Among the dancers who value her teaching are Violette Verdy, Denyse Bourgeois and Serge Perrault all of whom take classes at the Mercury on their rare visits to England. Renée (Zizi) Jeanmaire, Colette Marchand, Nathalie (Pixie) Philippart have taken (what Mim modestly calls) "odd lessons" with her.

But the "French" memory of Mim which will always stick in my mind—perhaps because it was the first and certainly for me the most moving—dates from the first appearance at the Adelphi Theatre in 1946 of Les Ballets des Champs-Élysées. The ballets, then so new to London, had a mixed reception. But certainly not from Madame Rambert. Ever apt to find and acclaim the best wherever it may be hidden, there she sat with her daughters, Angela and Lulu, clapping, shouting, crying with excitement.

After all these years she has not changed, and she never will. It is forever that same passion "both fervid and bold" of the Theatre Imperial.

\*Miriam Rambach, given in the October issue, is incorrect. Many books of reference (notably *Dance Encyclopedia*) refer to this name and we apologise for perpetuating this error.

# End of the quest

by RICHARD BUCKLE

The fourth and final stage of Richard Buckle's journey in search of the "lost" treasures of the Diaghilev Ballet which he collected for the Diaghilev Exhibition in Edinburgh and London. Dance and Dancers has acquired the first rights to print these extracts from *In Search of Diaghilev* by Richard Buckle, to be published in November by Sidgwick and Jackson at 30s.

ONE day I packed a bag and left precipitately for Cannes. It was much hotter on the Riviera, and two British warships were riding at anchor in the blue bay. I took a room in a cheap, noisy hotel beyond the railway, surrounded by main roads, trains, pneumatic drills and a children's playground. I was introduced to Cocteau by Georges Reymond in a passage at the Palais du Festival, and presented my letter of introduction from Jean Hugo. Cocteau was smaller than I had expected. He asked me to luncheon next day.

The entrance hall of the Carlton Hotel was full of awful-looking film people. At the desk I heard someone telephoning to arrange a car to take a party out to lunch with the Aga Khan at his villa. Cocteau was surrounded. I stood apart for a few minutes, then saw him raising his elbow at me as a signal that we should go to the bar for a drink.

## Caricature by Cocteau

He had done a drawing of Diaghilev for me, an ingeniously simple caricature which must be a good likeness. "This is for you, it is yours," he emphasised—very thoughtfully I considered—so that there should be no mistake. In Paris Mlle. Astruc had produced for me, among other letters, one from Bakst to her father, in which he recommended that Cocteau should design the poster of Nijinsky, for he had drawn him several times and drew very well. This Cocteau had, of course, done; and now Cocteau had designed a poster, or catalogue cover for me! I was very pleased. Eventually we used the drawing as a sort of colophon on the back cover of the catalogue.

**BORIS KOCHNO:** A drawing by Picasso of Diaghilev's last lieutenant who was the greatest influence on the final period of the Diaghilev Ballet.



I do not understand the politics of the film world: but I can believe that it is a world in which idealists are apt to suffer. In the bar Cocteau was surrounded by several impassioned people with grievances, among them André Cayatte, who made the powerful film *Nous sommes les assassins*. It was natural that at luncheon, which we ate à deux in a dark corner of the hotel dining-room, we should speak about films. The gist of his argument was



**PICASSO BY PICASSO:** A self-portrait of the great Spanish painter who designed a number of ballets for Diaghilev, including *The Three-Cornered Hat* and *Pulcinella*.

that the artist was helpless in a world of business.

"Do you know that my film *Le Sang d'un poète* was given at one cinema in New York every night for 18 years? And do you know what I got out of that? Nothing!

"When *Orphée* was to have its first performance in a certain European country, the boss of the circuit of cinemas wrote to our 'producer' asking him to be present. At the end of his letter he extended the invitation to Maria Déa and Jean Marais. Then, after the signature there was a postscript. 'If M. Cocteau would like to come too he is welcome'."

"If working in films is so awful," I said, "I wonder why you do it."

"We do it because we have an idea—something we want passionately to see as a film. And because we want to do it so much, the gangsters know they can safely offer us 20 francs and we shall have to accept it. But I shall never make another film."



**JEAN COCTEAU:** A portrait by Frederico de Madrazo. Cocteau first interested Diaghilev in the French movement in art before the first World War. He is still a leading spirit in the arts in France, specially in films.

I asked if there was no subject that might prove irresistible.

"I should like to make a film about Duse and d'Annunzio; and if I could get Garbo and Charlie Chaplin to play the two parts I might direct it. I once told Garbo that she ought to do *Phèdre*, but she had never heard of the play.

"In the days of Diaghilev we did what we did for almost nothing: but then one could live for five francs a day. Why are there no longer great rows over works of art? On the first night of *Parade* there was such a noise in the audience that Diaghilev, who was behind the scenes, thought the chandelier had fallen. That was when a woman nearly poked my eye out with her fan, and another exclaimed 'If I had known it would be like this, I should have brought the children!'—which I took as a compliment."

## Approach to Picasso

He promised that when he went north he would look out his old drawings and lend them to the Exhibition. One objective of my campaign seemed to have been attained! But what about the second? I asked Cocteau how I could gain admittance to see Picasso. He beckoned to a waiter and took from him two small sheets of paper. On one of these he wrote a note, which began, I remember, 'I never send anyone to you, but—' and went on to tell Picasso that I was very shy and that he must be kind and see me. On the other piece of paper he drew me a little map showing how I must turn off the main road at the beginning of Vallauris, climb the Route des Ecoliers and find Picasso's villa, La Galloise, on the side of the hill. At last! I could have kissed him.

On the Sunday after Easter we drove into Nîmes, and I went to the bull-fight with Vyvyan Holland, the son of Oscar Wilde. Looking across the oval Roman arena I caught my first sight of Picasso. A great white embroidered cape was spread

out over the barrier in front of him; men in gold and silver swung their scarlet *muletas* below him; and bulls were dying at his feet. All three *toreros* dedicated a bull to him, threw their hats at him and had them returned. He had to get up and sit down again several times.

After the *corrida* we met him in the street, and Lauretta Hugo introduced me. He was very small, dressed in a shapeless suit of mole-coloured corduroy. On his head he wore, flat, a large red and black dog-tooth-checked Harlequin cap, which he later pointed out was English, with a Bond Street label inside. He had the most mischievous eyes I had ever seen. He was a goblin.

Twenty minutes later we were in a white-tiled laboratory, drinking wine out of medical-looking beakers. Our host, M. Castel, was a wine-doctor and a friend of Picasso's. I heard the painter saying to his daughter "If I were a woman I should certainly be a barrister. You wear nice clothes; you go to the law courts; you make up your face; and you say to some poor devil [pointing] 'Condemned to death!'"

Picasso and his elder son Paolo were to dine with Douglas Cooper and John Richardson at the Château de Castille, half an hour's drive away; and I was invited too.

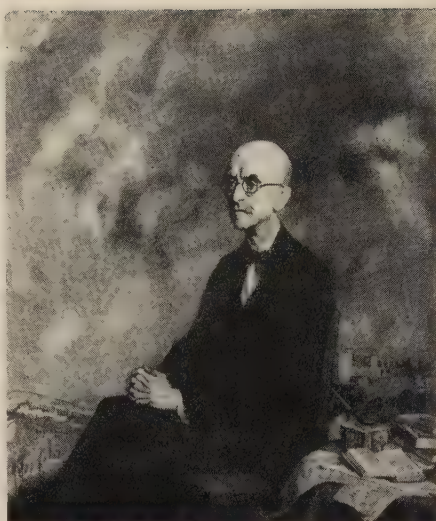
### Unfulfilled Promises

After dinner I overheard a remark that amused me. In the middle of the drawing-room, which was hung with triumphant Picassos, the painter stood for a moment alone with his son and Mme. M., both of whom he had painted so often. "What are we doing here?" he said.

At last, buoyed up by brandy, I got him on a sofa and told him what I wanted. "Yes, I have all the *Tricorne* designs, and a lot of different versions of the set for *Pulcinella*. Diaghilev couldn't make up his mind which he preferred. He liked them all so much, he wanted to use them all. I will look them out for you when I come to Paris in May. Keep in touch with Paolo."

Igor Markevitch told me subsequently that Diaghilev gave quite a different account of the *Pulcinella* designs. Diaghilev

**LONDON AT LAST:** A corner of the portrait gallery at Forbes House where the Diaghilev Exhibition finally came to rest.



**MANUEL DE FALLA:** Zuloaga's portrait of the famous Spanish composer which proved so elusive.

lev's story, apparently, was that Picasso could not get the decor right and was made to do it again and again.

Just as he was leaving, I realised who Picasso reminded me of: it was another Spaniard, another whose surname was Ruiz, another shrewd business man who had made a fortune, another genius—Antonio!

If promises were pictures I had done well for the Exhibition. At least I had done what I could.

### Lifar brings death-mask

A few days before the opening (in Edinburgh), Boris Kochno descended from the air, bringing with him only the necessities of life—that is to say, whisky and jewelled boxes—but no money. The next afternoon he made a round of the Edinburgh *antiquaires*, and at one shop bought several hundred pounds worth of watches which had belonged to King Farouk. That day I received a telegram from Serge Lifar: "Today Venice has celebrated the twenty-fifth anniversary of the death of Serge Diaghilev.

**SLEEPING BEAUTY'S STAIRCASE:** The grand staircase and entrance hall of Forbes House, transformed by Leonard Rosoman into the Castle of the Sleeping Beauty. Photos: Manor Studio



I arrive at Edinburgh tomorrow with his death-mask at 11.15." This was good news, if unexpected: for although Lifar had promised me in Paris that he would come, I had not really expected him.

There was only one snag: Kochno and Lifar had not spoken to each other for years. Since, together, they had watched over the dying Diaghilev in his room at the top of the Grand Hôtel des Bains de Mer on the Lido—a room I had visited in 1945—their work had tended to separate them rather than unite them, and the last of several disagreements had happened at the end of the war. Each assured me that there need be no difficulty: at a large party there would be no necessity for them to speak.

### Reunion in Edinburgh

It was not at a party, however, that they met. On the afternoon before our opening, I went to greet Alicia Markova at the airport and brought her at once to have a preview of the Exhibition. We found Serge Lifar and Georges Reymond in the portrait gallery; and almost immediately Kochno came in out of the rain. It was only a few seconds before Hans Wild, who was lurking with a camera, had asked the two old colleagues to pose for a photograph together.

They could no longer ignore each other—and indeed for the next few days in Edinburgh they were inseparable. They nagged at one another like a couple of schoolboys. "Why do you wave your hands about while you talk?", grumbled Boris. "Put them in your pockets. Hide them!" "But I have good hands. Why shouldn't I show them?" "Hide them. Nobody wants to see them. I have good things too"—producing a heavy gold box—"but I keep it in my pocket." "Well, I'm not a miser like you." If the Exhibition achieved nothing else, it brought Lifar and Kochno together.

\* \* \*

As long ago as March, when I had been with the Hugos in the south, it had occurred to me that we ought to have a portrait of Manuel de Falla. We had borrowed a

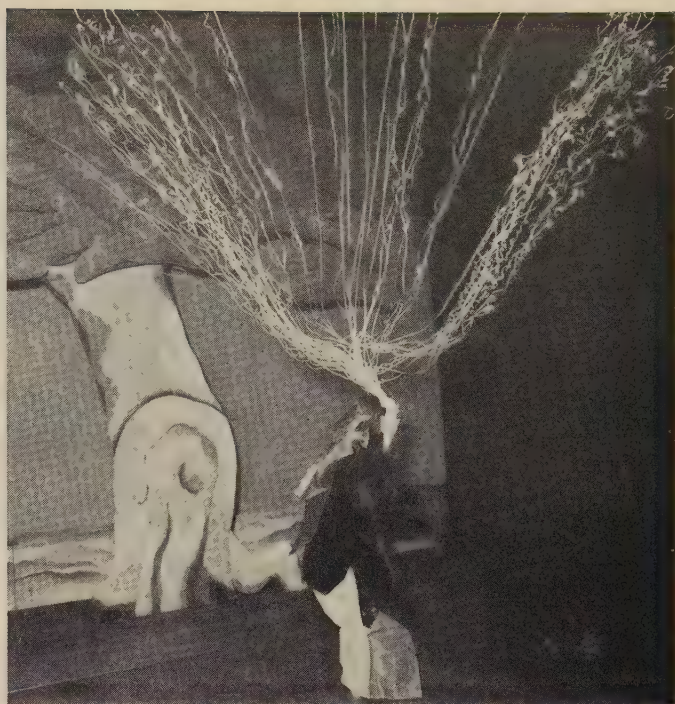
(continued on page 17)



**MEMORIES:** Tokuho Azuma as Matsuyama, the departed love, and Tsurunosuke Bando as Wankyu who mourns for her in *Ninin-Wankyu*.

**SPIDER'S WEB** (right): Massaya Fujima as the evil *Tsuchigumo* who turns into a spider and weaves his web.

Photos: Barratt's



## JAPAN IN BOW STREET

The **AZUMA KABUKI** company, appearing at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, in September, gave an exotic opening to the autumn season.

### FIRST PROGRAMME

Reviewed by Peter Williams

WHEN Frederick Ashton mounted his Japanese fable, *Madame Chrysanthème*, for Sadler's Wells earlier in the year, everybody got busy with their Kipling quotations about East being East and West being West and never the twain meeting. With the first appearance of the Azuma Kabuki company at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, on September 12, I began to feel that as far as the Japanese Theatre is concerned, Kipling was perfectly right. Of all the Oriental theatrical arts shown to a London audience in the past 10 years, the theatre art of Japan has proved the most difficult for the Occidental mind to thoroughly appreciate.

The mind's receptivity is largely dependent on environment and there is no doubt that the red brocade and gilt of our opera house hardly provided the setting most suited to this ancient, stylised and highly specialised theatre art form.

It was possibly a mistake to append the word "dancers" to this company. The actual dancing bore scant resemblance to any dancing we know in the West or to any that we have so far seen (India and Bali immediately come to mind) from the East.

Compared with Indian or Balinese, the language of gesture seemed limited, to say the least, yet it was hardly fair to make comparisons because what we saw were but tiny fragments from full-length Noh dramas. The very fact that much of what we were shown was from the Noh theatre was confusing in itself, as many of us had the idea, possibly mistaken, that Noh and Kabuki were two quite different Japanese theatrical forms. A possible Western equivalent to what we saw would be to give excerpts from Shakespeare, Congreve and Ben Travers, as well as from music-hall and revue, all in the one programme.

But as soon as the mind became attuned to the static nature of it all, and also to the

conventions, there was much of great beauty and it was as if everybody's Japanese dolls and colour prints had come to rather inanimate life.

The traditional pine tree was used for a setting almost throughout, a tree which seemed rather crude when compared with the exquisite refinement of arboreal representation in Japanese paintings.

### Ritual Opening

After the greeting (*Kojo*) in which the company—ranged across the stage in a sitting position—welcomed the audience, Masaya Fujima made an offering to the Gods (*Sambaso*). In a costume resembling an eagle he purified the earth with fire (for luck) and scattered salt for purification. This dance, which had certain affinities with Ram Gopal's Kathakali Eagle Dance, used to be given before shrines in Japan a thousand years ago.

Two Lions, father and cub, go through a testing dance in which the cub is thrown over a cliff to prove his maturity—all ends happily. The costumes in this Lion Dance (*Shakkyo*) are spectacular; the waving red and white manes form strange and beautiful patterns in the air.

The company's principal dancer, Tokuho Azuma, appears as Kiyohime, the dancing girl transformed into a snake who rests in the bell of the Dojoji Temple. She dances to symbolise the various stages of womanhood. The numerous changes of costume (changed on stage before the audience) and the serpentine movements as the girl becomes metamorphosed from snake to woman are the most interesting features of this excerpt from a 16th-century Noh drama.

By the time the second half of the programme started, the Western audience had become more acclimatised to this strange art. *Fukitori-Tsuma* (The Would-be Flute Player Seeks a Wife) could well be a scene from the Italian *Commedia dell'Arte*. The man who tries to play a flute in order to attract a wife and then ends up with an

ugly girl (brilliantly played by a man) is a typical music-hall interlude and extremely funny.

In complete contrast was the dance of the spider who tries to spread his web over all Japan (*Tsuchigumo*). It had an almost Grand Guignol quality. The silver streamers, representing the web, thrown over the stage created a fascinating theatrical effect.

The most expressive number, as the one which beautifully conveyed a mood of melancholy, was *Ninin-Wankyu* (*Memories*). Wankyu (Tsurunosuke Bando) mourns for his departed love, Matsuyama (Tokuho Azuma), beside a pine tree. The dance represents his two states of mind—despair at her departure, happiness in the memory of his past love. Here, both artists revealed their great mastery of their art.

The programme ended with a sort of Japanese Mardi Gras in *O-Matsuri No Hi* (*Festival Day*) in which all the dancers appeared in costumes of great beauty and fantasy, and a number of varied dances.

Although at the time much of the programme was difficult to follow and seemed, at times, incomprehensible to behold and harsh on the ear, in retrospect this world of make-believe where lions, spiders, courtesans and princes mingle naturally, takes on the quality of a dream—strange, inconsequent and compelling.

### SECOND PROGRAMME

Reviewed by Clive Barnes

IF in most ways the Azuma Kabuki Dancers were strange, unexpected and disconcerting, in one way at least they ran true to the form of all Covent Garden's post-war visitors—they slipped up in the planning of their repertory.

The second programme, first given on September 19, should have been used to introduce the company to London. Without making any more obvious concessions to Western taste than did its predecessor, it was better varied and generally more readily acceptable. It also revealed the full range of Kabuki dance-drama in a way the first programme most certainly did not.

Kabuki dance, like the Elizabethan drama, is a popular art form. It developed largely from the reaction against the aristo-

(continued on page 15)

# A new shorthand of the dance

WE live in a hurried age in which permanent values tend to be overlooked and neglected; it is an age in which craftsmen and the labour of love are superseded by machine-made luxuries that starve the soul and dissipate the spirit. Yet, curiously, this is also an age of scholarship and documentation which is born of a yearning for antiquity. Many people today are engaged in digging up fragments of the past, and by their efforts we are able to piece together the cultures of previous epochs.

Through the ages, dance, that elusive, joyous, yet fickle Muse has evaded capture by the written word, in consequence there is not much of substance to dig for; our choreographic archives are bare of the stuff of dance.

Time and again the style and essence of a period has been lost, and often the great truths and esoteric principles of the classical dance have been jeopardised by the inability of a generation to assimilate and transmit the teachings of the great masters. The poverty, insecurity and falling standards of ballet in our time may be attributed in some large measure to the ineffectual means of passing on the essential foundations of past traditions.

## An end to muddle

I believe an event has happened that is going to affect the future of dance to an extraordinary degree; and through this I have hopes that the careless, inefficient and irresponsible habits of choreographers, ballet masters and dancers are about to be checked. It may be that the days of subterfuge are numbered. My hopes are raised by the invention of a new way of writing dance. It is an invention that may well prove to be the greatest contribution that British ballet, in the 30 years of its existence, has made to the art. It is likely that we stand upon the threshold of a new era.

A year ago when writing in these columns about dance notation, I advocated the use of Laban's method. Now, I acclaim the appearance of a new inventor, with a wonderful new system that will make the baffling problem of recording dance remarkably easy. What is this system I am so enthusiastic about?

It is a method which has taken eight years to perfect, devised by Rudolf Benesh, an English painter-musician born of Czech parents, and his wife Joan Benesh, a dancer in the Sadler's Wells company. It was Benesh, as the artist-theoretician, who hit upon a new and original idea for charting human movement, and his wife, as practical

by

**JOHN GREGORY**

**An explanation of the Benesh Movement Notation which may well revolutionise the method of recording ballets.**

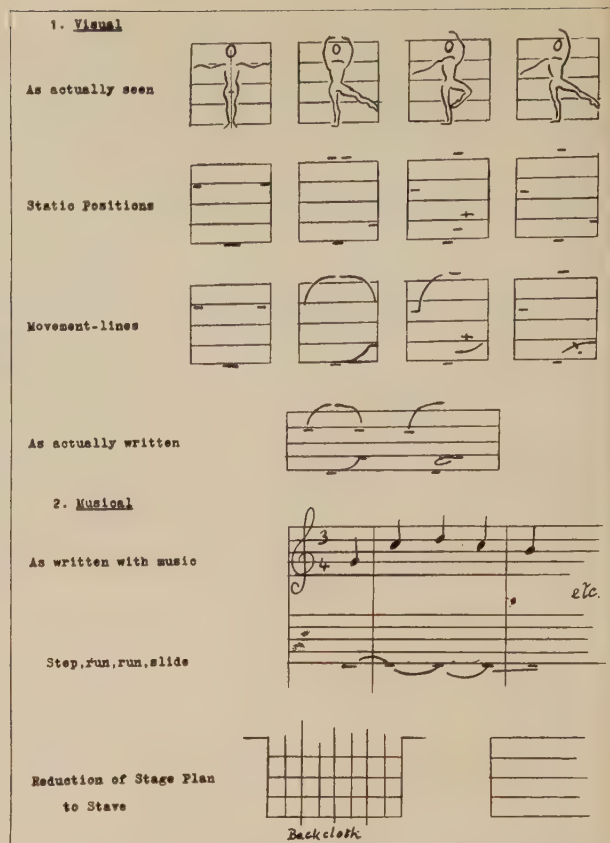
**THE BASIS** (right): Diagrams showing how the system works.

**IN PRACTICE** (below): A fragment of John Cranko's *The Lady and the Fool* for the Sadler's Wells Ballet—the entrance of the Lady, as written in Benesh Movement Notation. Reproduced by kind permission of John Cranko.

executant, who helped him to evolve a complete and workable system that can encompass the intricacies of dance in all its variations.

The writing is simple and economic, a lucid shorthand derived from only three basic signs. These three signs serve to fix the extremities of the human body, and indicate the path of movement in three-dimensional space. The movement of the dancer is seen from the artist's viewpoint, from the back of the stage looking towards the auditorium. This is a novel and workmanlike approach which no other systems of notation have attempted. But probably the most brilliant innovation of all is the use of the musical stave.

Benesh uses the stave horizontally, thus enabling the musical staves to run parallel above the movement staves, so that music and movement are measured exactly together, and may be read together. The five lines of the stave provide the scaffolding upon which the anatomy of movement is pegged. The precise and detailed codification of the various parts of the body is skilfully managed by the subdivision of such parts as hands, arms, legs, torso, and head into five parts, numbering always from the extremities inwards.



The method enables very exact definition of complex movements, of holds and contacts as may be encountered in *pas de deux* and group dances. The solo and group performers in a ballet are placed on staves one below the other in a similar manner to the arrangement of an orchestral score. Below the movement stave of each performer location signs are given, so that not only the shape and proportions of the movement are written, but the exact position upon the stage.

## No need for ground plan

It will be seen that this method dispenses with the need for floor plans which require separate scrutiny in deciphering movement and orientation. I know of no other method that entirely discards a ground plan; indeed most systems in the past appear to have been based on the floor-pattern. The direct singleness of purpose with which all aspects are so neatly tied up in the Benesh system enables it to be written at speed with the minimum of effort, and to be read at a glance.

For years I have advocated the expediency of Laban's Notation; but without wishing to hurt or offend all my friends who labour in that field, I cannot refrain from voicing my preference for the Benesh system which I find at once so completely practical for the writing of ballet. It will not take years to develop, it calls for no laborious drudgery, it will not give poor dancers mental indigestion. It is concise, direct, easily memorised, and quick to translate. In short, it comes as a miracle.

Rudolf and Joan Benesh are young and ardent workers; I hope they will live to see the fruition of their plans. For the present they will teach the system at Sadler's Wells School, and operate a postal course for dancers abroad. Other projects will follow, including research, analysis of dance forms, recording of authentic versions of the classics and modern ballets, and the preparation of a library of ballet scores.

This block contains a musical score for the entrance of the Lady in John Cranko's *The Lady and the Fool*. The score is written on musical staves, with lines indicating the placement of body parts and movement lines. The notation is written in Benesh Movement Notation, which is a shorthand system for recording dance movements. The score includes parts for the Lady, 12 Girls, and 12 Boys. The notation is written on musical staves, with lines indicating the placement of body parts and movement lines. The notation is written in Benesh Movement Notation, which is a shorthand system for recording dance movements.

# Agnes Comes A Cropper!

by  
CLAYTON COLE

The dancing in the Todd-AO film of *Oklahoma!* has brought ballet onto the widest screen yet. But Agnes de Mille's choreography failed to repeat its stage success.

THE historical importance of *Oklahoma!* as a stage musical cannot be overestimated. And its influence was largely generated by its utilisation of dance values. The integration of dance forms and qualities throughout the entire staging of the piece caused a homogeneity of style that in one sweep cleared the boards of isolated dance "numbers", chorus lines, ballet interpolations, and solo specialties.

The rhythmic flow of the drama was thus increased and a new aesthetic development was added to the conventions of the lyric stage. Appreciation was further enhanced by the fact that the dances themselves were the work of an experienced ballet choreographer, with a sound knowledge of the folk forms transposed and theatricalised, and could stand alone.

Now this same choreographer, Agnes de Mille, is responsible for the overall artistic direction of the film version. Unfortunately she has come a cropper, for she has failed in every particular to recapture the breezy ebullience, the gusto, the feeling of America-on-the-move, that characterised the stage presentation.

The first big dance in the film is *Everything's Up To Date In Kansas City*. This is utterly formless. The focus is intended to be on Gene Nelson as Will Parker. After the first chorus, sung by Nelson, Charlotte Greenwood is given the centre of the screen for another chorus. Without any break in continuity Nelson starts dancing. But nothing has been done to shift the focus from Miss Greenwood. Consequently she maintains our interest as she shuffles off to one side of the screen, singing to herself,

NIGHT-  
MARE :  
Bambi Lynn  
as Laurey (in  
white) searches  
for Curley  
and stumbles  
into the gam-  
ing house run  
by his rival,  
Jud, in the  
Dream Ballet  
from Okla-  
homa!



while Nelson dances his heart out in the centre.

The great strength of the play lay in its unbroken consistency of style—sets were stylised, with the Dream Ballet maintaining the same style, only further extended as in a dream. In fact, costumes, staging, sets, book, score, lyrics and dances were all products of one unified artistic conception: naïveté seen through the eyes of sophistication.

In the film, rather than save stylisation for the Dream Ballet where it has point, many of the supposedly real scenes are played against the Oliver Smith sky when we are outdoors, and many of the costumes are commentaries on the mode of the day while others are literal copies. This continual jumping back and forth between the real and the interpreted robs the film of any consistency.

The Dream Ballet should be the choreographic highlight. It must stand, not only

on its own merits, but also on the validity of its character extensions: as they would be extended by Laurey, whose dream it is. The spirit, if not the appearance of Gordon MacRae's Curley must be recognisable in the Curley of James Mitchell. The squat, robust MacRae is all out-going—the lean, glamorous Mitchell is all introspection, though the physical differences can be excused as a logical glorification of a girl in love. Bambi Lynn is far too delicate to be a match for the porcine Shirley Jones as Laurey, though here again the refinements of a dream might explain the depth of reaction apparent in the dream counterpart.

But by having Rod Steiger as Jud appear as Jud in the dream rather than be represented by a dancing counterpart, de Mille has taken an artistically indefensible step. The resultant confusion of reality and dream is irreconcilable. And this confusion extends to the dancing; people walk on and dance off.

## JAPAN IN BOW STREET

(continued from page 13)

cratic Noh drama (the "classical" Japanese theatre) and the feudal society that supported it. However, in its development it retained many of the elements of Noh drama, especially the comic interludes (or "Noh-Kyogen") which were interspersed in the serious drama, as in the Greek and Elizabethan Theatres). The second great classic Japanese art, Banraku, the puppet theatre, also had a considerable influence on Kabuki dance-drama, both in narrative technique and in some of its stiffly stylised movements.

The programme opened with *Dammari*, a traditional pantomime symbolising the universality of art and the spread of Kabuki dancing.

The dance episode for Wisteria Maidens which followed seemed sweet, charming and, as someone informed me in the interval, "just like Madam Butterfly."

The first part of the programme ended with a Kabuki adaptation of a Noh comic interlude, *Sannin Katawa* (The Three Imposters), about a duped merchant. Short, brisk and well-characterised, its humour is as universal as roguery. Incidentally, this season has emphasised the comic side of Noh drama, which has possibly been underestimated in Western books on the subject.

The second part opened with *Kasane*, a dance drama drenched in blood and weltering in passion. Obviously our own Jaco-

bean drama had nothing on the Kabuki where horror and revenge were concerned—the gory pages of Cyril Tournear are child's play compared with this blood bath.

This short adaptation of a longer Kabuki drama has forceful conviction. Melodramatic and even sadistic, it nevertheless possesses genuine tragic feeling and sound psychological insight. The "choreography" was imaginatively produced and the mask-like intensity of its protagonists, Tokuho Azuma and Masaya Fujima, gave the drama a sort of grand dignity.

### Witch-princess is a male

The other piece given in the programme's second part, *Momiji Gari*, was a traditional dance telling of a legendary witch who masquerades as a beautiful princess and then, transformed to her true self, devours her suitors. The dance was valuable primarily as an example of the art of the Onnagata, or woman-impersonator. In the traditional Kabuki companies all the women's roles are undertaken by men (another Elizabethan parallel) and the witch-princess was portrayed by the company's leading male dancer Tsurunosuke.

In Japan, Kabuki dances are often linked together in sets, an example being *Setsumetsu-ka* (Snow, Moon and Flowers), each dance being created around the central symbolic idea. Such a group opened the last part of the programme, and opportunity was taken of showing three distinct forms of Kabuki dancing.

Flower, *Noh Dojoji*, was in the Noh style—a "posture piece" (Shosagoto) of the Hengemono variety, in which the character is transformed (by costume changes and masks) actually on the stage. Snow, *Ningyo O-Shichi*, showed the puppet theatre influence in Kabuki dance, and was a puppet dance somewhat similar to that performed in London last year by Miho Hanyagui.

These two were of chiefly academic interest, but the third of the trio, Moon, *Hiren*, had considerable intrinsic value. The story is of a warrior and his beloved both slain by enemy swordsmen, and the choreography is based on medieval court dances. The simple gestures performed by these monumentally impassive dancers seemed to open up a whole epoch and indicate a civilisation of which I for one had never even heard.

The programme ended with another metamorphosis dance *Kagami Jishi*, in which a girl becomes a lion. The drama showed a greater degree of dance characterisation than seems to be found in most Japanese dancing, as the girl gradually transmogrifies into a conventionally stylised lion.

Viewed purely as dancing, the Azuma Kabuki season had its limitations. But regarded as a theatrical spectacle, as a journey into a new aesthetic landscape, it provided an exciting experience.

# West went North

The West Country Ballet, based in Somerset, presented three new ballets during their visit to the recent Edinburgh Festival.

A FEW years back the going was easy for ballet companies. A theatrical boom ensured the survival of any rag, tag and bobtail group, even if it was only motivated by its director's ambitions for cash or glory. Those days are past and now a company has got to present a coherent artistic policy to justify its existence.

The West Country Ballet, which although based in Somerset made its bow at the Princes Theatre, Edinburgh, during the recent Festival, is a promising venture that deserves to do well. Despite any present limitations its aims are worthwhile.

A small but extremely competent professional group of dancers has been formed by the company's Artistic Director, Frances Crossley, with the intention of providing a link between folk-dancing and classical ballet. Whether the road to success is paved with good intentions like that other road to hell, I am not certain, but a creditable start has been made with a programme of three ballets that was entertaining and unpretentious. A fair comparison can be drawn between this group and the programmes at Ballet Workshop, and although the Workshop has produced one or two ballets better than any shown here, the whole Edinburgh programme was above the Workshop average.

In two respects, however, the company needs improvement. The use of tape-recordings for accompaniment is not as satisfactory as even a piano, but this was an expedient imposed by the smallness of the theatre and will presumably be rectified.

The other shortcoming is the designing of the ballets, which is almost without interest. A restricted purse need not result in a poverty of ideas, and Miss Crossley was ill-advised to undertake the designing herself. The collaboration of a designer familiar with ballet design would have made all the difference.

## BLACK-EYED SUSAN

First given by West Country Ballet at the Princes Theatre, Edinburgh, on August 22, 1955. Choreography, Elizabeth West. Music, Alec Rowley. Decor and Costumes, Frances Crossley.

**WARNING FROM HERNE:** Peter Darrell as Henry VIII, Frances Crossley as Anne Boleyn and Ronnie Curran (kneeling) as Herne the Hunter, in a dramatic moment from Michael Holmes' Herne The Hunter.

## CAST

Susan — — — SUSAN RICHTER  
William — — — PETER DARRELL  
Officer — — — PETER BROWNLEE  
Susan's Friend — — — BRENDA LAST  
William's Friend — — — RONNIE CURRAN

## Sailors and Girls

SET in the time of the Napoleonic Wars, the ballet opens with Susan impatiently awaiting the return of her sailor husband William. An officer makes advances to her, and William, returning and seeing this, promptly knocks him down. William is sentenced to death, but is reprieved in time for all to end happily.

Elizabeth West, the choreographer, has worked extensively for Muriel Carpenter's Bristol School of Dancing (where among other things she has choreographed versions of the full-length *Coppelia* and *Peter and the Wolf*) and the Bristol Old Vic. For this, her first professional ballet, she appears to have derived some inspiration from Cranko's *Pineapple Poll*, but unfortunately not enough. Both the story and choreography are too slight to sustain the ballet's three scenes. The music by Alec Rowley is likewise undistinguished.

Most of the mime, however, was amusingly contrived, and the well-produced cast worked hard to give the ballet a spirited performance that went far in disguising its defects. Susan Richter was charming as her black-eyed namesake and Peter Darrell clownish his way through the role of William with the cheeky gusto of a first-class music hall comic.

## HERNE THE HUNTER

First given by West Country Ballet at the Princes Theatre, Edinburgh, on August 22, 1955. Choreography, Michael Holmes. Music, arranged from 16-century sources by Edgar Hunt. Decor and Costumes, Frances Crossley.

## CAST

Henry VIII — — — PETER DARRELL  
Herne the Hunter — — — RONNIE CURRAN  
Anne Boleyn — — — FRANCES CROSSLEY  
Page — — — — — BRENDA LAST  
Courtiers — IAIN MONTAGUE, PETER BROWNLEE, MAUREEN CORP, SUSAN RICHTER

**FROLIC IN WINDSOR FOREST:** A Page (Brenda Last) dances for the pleasure of HENRY VIII, Anne Boleyn and the courtiers during their progress in the neighbourhood of Windsor.

Photos: G. B. L. Wilson

A TUDOR-STYLE ballet in which one of the principal characters is no less than Henry VIII sounds anything but promising; indeed one felt like murmuring with Shakespeare's Master Page, "will none but Herne the Hunter serve your turn?" Yet in the event the ballet proved surprisingly successful.

The work is based on the legends of Herne the Hunter, the ghostly hunter of Windsor Forest, and his reputed opposition to the King's marriage with Anne Boleyn. Henry is out hunting with Anne and his court when he encounters Herne who, unseen by the courtiers, gives a warning to the King and the ill-fated Anne.

Michael Holmes's choreography is primarily a mixture of 16th century dances (*galliards*, *corantos* and the rest), but the role of Herne is conceived in a modern style, and a few dances, notably a short solo for the Page, are more or less classical. The ballet, undoubtedly the best of the company's repertory, has considerable dramatic interest and shows a sensitive feeling for its rumbustious period. The music, selected and arranged from contemporary sources by Edgar Hunt, was entirely suitable.

Ronnie Curran, an ex-Jooss dancer, was excellent as Herne, dancing and acting with unrestrained power. Peter Darrell had the nearly impossible task of portraying Henry, and although his performance need not cause Laughton sleepless nights, his bluff and hearty Hal was gratifyingly convincing.

The weakest aspect of the performance was Frances Crossley's Anne Boleyn, which lacked stage presence. With a stronger personality in this role and a more prepossessing setting the ballet would be most effective.

## THE SELCHIE

First given by West Country Ballet at the Princes Theatre, Edinburgh, on August 22, 1955. Choreography, Wendy Hilton. Music, Michael Hobson. Decor and costumes, Frances Crossley.

## CAST

Angus — — — — — RONNIE CURRAN  
Jeannie — — — — — FRANCES CROSSLEY  
Seal Woman — — — — — WENDY HILTON  
Angus' Mother — — — — — BRENDA LAST

## Villagers

THE ballet is founded on an ancient Scots myth that seals are able to take on human form, but if anyone steals their skins while they are thus transformed they are unable to return to the sea.

Angus, who is about to be betrothed to Jeannie, sees one of the *Seal-Women* on the beach and leads her home to his parents' cottage. He is strongly attracted to her, but is



eventually persuaded to allow her to return to her home, and his betrothal with Jeannie is celebrated.

The union between ballet and folk-dancing is here unhappily arbitrary. With the summary dismissal of the Seal-Woman from the scene, the pipes strike up and the company instantly swings into the *finale* of Highland dancing arranged by Peter Quinn (whose London school incidentally was the subject of an article in *DANCE AND DANCERS* in August, 1953) and Frances Crossley. The two parts of the ballet are in water-tight compartments, and the ending has little in common, either stylistically or emotionally, with what has gone before.

The choreography of the first part is not without merit and shows an advance on the previous choreography I have seen from Wendy Hilton, but it tended to be formless and the subject called for more imaginative invention.

Michael Hobson's score was tactfully Scots and supported the ballet well. The Scots dancing, to the music of the pipes, was more authentic than theatrical.

Wendy Hilton's own performance as the Seal-Woman had a shy feyness and animal grace that was worthy of a better integrated ballet. Curran contributed another notable performance as Angus. C.A.B.



**SEAL WOMAN INTERFERES:** Wendy Hilton as the Seal Woman, Frances Crossley as Jeannie and Ronnie Curran as Angus in Wendy Hilton's *The Selchie*.



**THE WEDDING CAN PROCEED:** The Seal Woman having returned to her home, Angus is free to marry Jeannie. A moment towards the end of Hilton's ballet.

Photos: G. B. L. Wilson

## The End of Buckle's Quest for Diaghilev

(continued from page 12)

life-size painting of Stravinsky by Jacques-Emile Blanche from the Musée d'Art Moderne, and we had drawings of other composers who worked for Diaghilev: but of Falla nothing. I immediately felt sure that he must have been painted by Zuloaga, a painter who began his career as an adventurous student in Paris, with Picasso, and ended as the most popular and expensive portrait-painter in Spain. If it existed, this at least would be a typical sort of picture.

I wrote to a friend in Madrid, the Condesa de San Esteban de Canongo, asking if she would make enquiries. She replied that there was such a portrait and that I must write to Zuloaga's son, Don Antonio, who owned it.

### Success, then complications

He lived in Paris, and the picture was in Spain: but he wrote back very helpfully and made no difficulty. We exchanged several letters in French. All seemed to be going well; I catalogued the painting and agreed to insure it for £4,000; then, just before the exhibition opened in Edinburgh, I received a telegram 'Desist send picture—Zuloaga,' which I took to mean that the picture was not coming. When I knew we were to take the show to London I wrote again. Don Antonio had by now gone to Switzerland, and he asked me to write to his sister in Spain. This I did, and after a short correspondence it emerged that there was difficulty with the Ministry of Fine Arts in Madrid. Two photographs of the picture, which was in San Sebastian, had to be supplied before a permit could be considered to send it abroad. The photographs were taken and sent to Madrid, but still nothing happened. I wrote to the Condesa de San Esteban, whom I knew to be expert at cajoling Ministers, and asked her to use her influence. She smoothed the path, and the permit was granted. Several more letters and telegrams passed between London and San Sebastian. All seemed to be settled.

Then I had a resigned letter from the painter's daughter saying that the difficul-

ties were too great to be overcome. I asked what they were. She replied that the Chamber of Commerce in San Sebastian were not satisfied that the picture could safely leave the country. I wrote again to the Condesa, who again went to see the Ministry. She, they and I wrote to banish the doubts of the Chamber of Commerce in San Sebastian. By this time the London exhibition was already open. Mme. Zuloaga de Suarez suggested that it might be easier to exhibit the picture in London at a later date. I told her that no Diaghilev Exhibition would ever be held again, that it was now or never. There was a silence. The Exhibition was extended. I determined to have the portrait, which had never been seen outside Spain, before we closed. I wrote again.

A fortnight before the Exhibition ended the portrait of Manuel de Falla came to the city which had first seen his *Three-Cornered Hat*. It was a bigish picture, life-size, three-quarter length, showing the pensive composer, with a parchment coloured skull, seated against a lowering Spanish landscape. We had to re-hang a whole wall of the portrait-gallery to get it in; and the *Observer* were horrified to hear that the transport alone had cost £40. The portrait's arrival was closely followed by that of Mme. Zuloaga de Suarez, who pronounced that it was very badly lit. Now, at the time of writing, two months after the dispersal of our Exhibition, I have just heard that a difficulty has arisen over payment for the insurance in pesetas; and the correspondence is resumed.

### Karsavina speaks

There was a party of 500 people to see Lady Harewood open the London Exhibition. Mme. Karsavina spoke after her; and she ended her speech with these words:

"Perhaps we, Diaghilev's artists, lived too intensely in the excitement of the present moment for us to gauge the far-reaching import of the fresh artistic movement. But, of course, we had an advantage, that unforgettable experience of working and moving in the aura of his unique personality.

"We knew his greatness and we knew his failings—we loved both, so unusually fascinating was his personal charm, and so consistent his career. Through his many

phases he remained the same essentially: he wanted the art to be living, not an immutable formula. Classicism and modernism were to him but modes of expression, each belonging to its respective time. On the quality of either he was uncompromising—only the genuine, the perfect of its kind, was acceptable to him.

### Nostalgic Chaos

"I had the chance to see this Exhibition a week or so before the opening day. It was hard to believe it would, in a short time, become what you see it now. Over precarious planks, under scaffolding with artists at work, dodging step-ladders and paint-pots, I found my way at last to the office. To see this chaos put me in a happy frame of mind; it reminded me of the preparations for the first season of the Ballets Russes in the Châtelet in Paris. With this difference—that we made far, far more noise.

"Diaghilev, who never stooped to compromise where artistic values were at stake, had ordered several rows of seats to be taken away to enlarge the orchestra pit. We rehearsed on the stage, the carpenters hammered in the auditorium, at the back the stage-hands noisily shifted the scenery. The piano faintly but valiantly tinkled through all this. Diaghilev shouted orders to the carpenters and carried on a press conference in between.

"Suddenly all became quiet, the auditorium emptied, the stage hands had left, the artists remained on the stage. Diaghilev looked at his watch, said: 'Oh, it is noon,' or, if you will forgive the slang, what he said was: '*Tout Paris bouffe à midi—allons bouffer!*' Don't think for a moment he went to lunch leaving his company starving—in a few minutes waiters appeared carrying trestles, and an excellent meal was served.

"Looking at this exhibition I find a link with Diaghilev's method of arranging one—not a mere presentation of catalogued exhibits, but the effect as a whole. To have made it so representative of his influence on the arts, so comprehensive of its progressive development, was in itself no mean task. But to have transformed this house into a decor was imaginative and bold. I think he would have approved of it."



**RAMBERT BALLERINA MARRIES:** Beryl Goldwyn and her husband, Christopher Norwood, after their wedding on September 10. Other members of Ballet Rambert can be seen in the background: Gillian Martlew, Noreen Sopwith, Patricia Ashworth, John Chesworth and Norman Morrice. Photo: G. B. L. Wilson



**FESTIVAL BALLET WEDDING:** In September Anita Landa and Michel Hogan were married at the British Embassy in Paris. Harald Lander was one of the witnesses. The couple spent their honeymoon in Lausanne. Photo: Paul Wilson

# curtain up!

## Baseless rumours

THE ghouls are at it again. People who certainly could not tell you the name of the present President of Panama are convinced that they can name his successor and already we have been assured on two separate occasions that a certain performance was to be the last that Fonteyn would ever give in London.

Perhaps the rumour-mongers might do well to consider the distress they cause many people. Surely they know that our most celebrated ballerina will not slip quietly away never to return. Loyalty to her company and generosity to her public have always guided her actions in the past and her farewell, when it comes, will be a very special occasion and known well in advance.

Meanwhile, it seems likely that Fonteyn will have the opportunity to conquer yet another continent before she retires. The prospects of an exchange between Sadler's Wells and a Russian company have never been brighter.

## A Lost Giselle

ON September 10 Beryl Goldwyn married Christopher Norwood at the Paddington Registry Office. The ceremony and reception were attended by many friends, including most of the Ballet Rambert. The bridegroom is the brother of another Rambert dancer, Alison Norwood, and the couple met while he was still a Cambridge undergraduate when the company was playing at the Arts Theatre in Cambridge. He went to a party in search of his sister and met Beryl. He now works for the Coal Board in Manchester and his wife is leaving ballet.

Beryl Goldwyn was considered one of the finest of all English Giselles and her decision will cause great regret among her admirers, but all will join in wishing her well in her new role as housewife.

Since the above was written I hear that Beryl Goldwyn will be dancing with the

Ballet Rambert during its tour of Italy. I hope this means that she will return to dance, from time to time, when household chores permit.

## Handout howlers

BALLET enthusiasts were startled at reading in a recent programme that forthcoming performances by Rovi Pavloff's Continental Ballet would include "complete original productions as given at the Marywisky Theatre"—presumably referring to the Maryinsky Theatre of Leningrad, now known as the Kirovsky.

Publicity written by those who know little of ballet quite often contains such slips. When the Monte Carlo Ballet descended on Adelaide, in Australia, in 1936—its first ballet since Pavlova in 1929—the young man entrusted with preliminary publicity found two ballets, *Les Sylphides* and *Les Femmes de Bonne Humeur*, side by side in his advance notes. Trying to be helpful, he translated, with the result that handbills were distributed in thousands announcing a ballet called *The Sylphic Ladies of Bonny Humour*.

And when Marie Rambert's company was in New Zealand in 1948 the same ignorance of repertoire affected advance posters. Every time Tudor's *Gala Performance* was included in a programme the company arrived to find posters heralding *GALA PERFORMANCE!* in enormous letters, followed by the rest of the repertoire in small type.

## Lhotka for Canada

THE ballet company from Zagreb which appeared in London earlier this year has lost its principal dancer. Nenad Lhotka, who had formerly left the company temporarily to appear with Janine Charrat, has now accepted the post of ballet master to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. He is married to an English girl, Jill Morse, who appeared with the short-lived Ballet Legat and will now become a soloist with the Canadian company.

The Royal Winnipeg Ballet has also re-

cently had the advantage of a local boy's return. Paddy Stone, spending a few weeks in his home town, created a new ballet for the company. He was on his way to New York to open in Joyce Grenfell's revue, which, as Joyce Grenfell Requests the *Pleasure*, had such a successful run in London last year.

This enterprising Canadian ballet company has made a splendid recovery after it lost all its costumes and scenery in a fire. Public-spirited Canadians have made good the loss in various ways and the company is literally back on its feet again.

## Pardon our blush

IN the number *Rag Mags*, in the Oxford Eight revue at the New Watergate Theatre, DANCE AND DANCERS itself appeared on the London stage. Three pairs of artists represented the covers of DANCE AND DANCERS, MUSIC AND MUSICIANS and PLAYS AND PLAYERS. Gillian Moran and Don Erikson as DANCE AND DANCERS (seen in *D & D* photograph below) had some witty lines:

"Our make-ups are stunning, our costumes are chic



We were rather uneven in Coppelia last week.

He: We pose like this

She: and like this

Both: Wearing hardly a stitch.

So all of you will know just which is which."

The rest, unfortunately, we cannot print.

### Liver for toes?

**R**ECIPE for liver à la Ludmilla Tcherina. Take one ballerina who has stubbed her toe just before a gala performance. Take also a small piece of calves' liver and put it into the toe of her shoe. At the end of the performance the inflammation has gone from the toe and the liver is cooked—but not eaten! Is this what is known as "pressure cooking"?

### Ballet beauty

**T**HE citizens of Edinburgh are rapidly becoming highly qualified experts on Danish ballet. Svend Kragh-Jacobsen's book on the Royal Danish Ballet was published while the company was appearing in Edinburgh for the Festival. Now, after a pause of only a few weeks, this city is to see Festival Ballet with its own productions of *Napoli* and *Etudes* and its several Danish dancers who are now with the company.

Obviously the management of Edinburgh's Empire Theatre are not over-awed by the cultural entertainments they present as a change from their usual variety bills. We saw advertisements for both companies posted in a frame which had obviously been selected with some care. Round its border were the words: "A lovely girl is like a melody—you get plenty of both in this show". True enough, but rather unexpected.

### Off with the motley

**A**T a party given by the Royal Festival Hall in honour of Festival Ballet's sixth anniversary, Dolin in a speech re-

## Dancer You Will Know

### BRYAN LAWRENCE

**B**ORN in Birmingham. First teacher was Miss Kent in Bournemouth; later studied with Miss Esmé Preston in Barnstaple, Devon. In September 1949 he joined the Sadler's Wells School, entering the Upper School four years later. Danced in operas at Covent Garden and walked on in the ballets. Joined Sadler's Wells Ballet for the 1954 Edinburgh Festival and danced in *The Firebird*; joined the Theatre Ballet a few weeks later.

**Roles (in London):** *Les Sylphides*; *Horn Player in The Rake's Progress*; *Sailor in Pineapple Poll*; *Orange Boy in Danses Concertantes*; *Brown Skater in Les Patineurs*; *Cyclist in Café des Sports*; (in Provinces): *Friend in Blood Wedding*; *Pas de Trois in Danses Concertantes*; *Lover in House of Birds*.

**I**N the autumn of 1954 the Theatre Ballet acquired the services of two young men, both equally promising and both equally tall. One was Bryan Lawrence, the other was Donald MacLeary, but, as they always appeared together, which one was which aroused quite a lot of interest among regular ballet-goers before it could eventually be settled.

Lawrence is a naturally gifted dancer, a



fine product of the Wells' School. In his first leading role, in *Les Sylphides*, he made an immediate impression which re-emphasised the obvious promise he had already shown in the *corps de ballet*. When his technique, already far from negligible, has acquired the strength that a few more years should give to it, he will probably be ready to join the ever-growing number of first-class British male dancers.

quested that next year there should be running water in the dressing rooms. This seems a not unreasonable request considering that productions of ballet and opera are now a permanent feature of the Festival Hall's year. How, without the aid of ade-

quate washing facilities, anybody gets all that body make-up off after a performance of *Scheherazade*, specially when it comes in the middle of a programme, is one of those things we cannot envisage.

**Birthdays will be found on page 30**

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# New Books

## A New Tradition . . .

*The Sadler's Wells Ballet. A History and an Appreciation*, by Mary Clarke. With 55 illustrations (A. & C. Black, 21s.).

WITH what little enthusiasm does the Englishman approach new books about the history of his country, especially when he thinks that he knows most of it already! I doubt if I was alone in having little feeling of exhilaration when facing up to this new history of Britain's national ballet, which America has incessantly called "fabulous." The first few pages dispelled any misgivings I might have had.

Mary Clarke has compiled a document which is completely alive, frank, and as absorbing as an adventure story. Her heroines—Lilian Baylis and Dame Ninette de Valois; her heroes—the struggling band of dancers and choreographers sometimes rather scorned by their fellow countrymen; their adventure—overcoming the villain Prejudice, who for many years stalked this island, convincing its inhabitants that the British were an inartistic race. Happy ending with good Sense overcoming Stupidity; apotheosis with all nations recognising and accepting British ballet as something to contend with.

It could all have been incredibly dull because no scandal which rocks most ballet companies, even national ones, to their foundations ruffles the steady progress of this company from Waterloo Road to Bow Street via Islington. Steady though the progress has been, it has been fraught with obstacles every inch of the way. Without the great foresight of the two heroines, the obstacles would have become an insurmountable barrier.

But at no point is the book dull because Mary Clarke has liberally interspersed her historical survey with stories and reported comments, some highly amusing, that bring her characters to life. Nor has she fallen into the trap, which so often ensnares historical writers, of being ruled by her own personal assessment of any ballet, but has taken a cross section of general opinion and written criticism. And she has not considered her task too dignified to omit the trivia which is what makes any history flesh and blood rather than dry bones.

This is probably the most important book yet to be written on British ballet, but it goes even further than that as it shows great insight into British character as a whole. Twenty one shillings seems very little for a book that cannot help but become a standard work for all time. P.W.

## . . . and an Old One

*The Royal Danish Ballet—An Old Tradition and a Living Present*, by Svend Kragh-Jacobsen. (A. & C. Black, 10s. 6d.).

ONE of the most important happenings in ballet in the 20th century has been the discovery by the rest of Europe—to be followed soon, it appears, by America—of the Royal Danish Ballet. It became strikingly clear when the company came to Covent Garden in 1953, making its first trip outside its own country, that balletically the Danes had long been hiding their light under a bushel. If—in Legat's classic phrase—the Russian ballet is "the French school forgotten by the French themselves," in Copenhagen the school of Vestris and Noverre survived in an even purer form until the nineteen-fifties.

Artistically, the Danes have always tended to suffer from an inferiority complex, an attitude not without some justification in the spheres of music and painting, in which the creations of Danish artists and composers have often seemed little more than provincial copies of foreign models.

But so far as their ballet is concerned, it cannot be said often enough that, provided they develop the wonderful tradition of mime and pure classicism they have so lovingly tended for nearly a century, the Danes need fear competition from no other country.

Slick acrobatics and cheapness may be at a premium today, but this may not always be so. Those at present responsible for the destiny of the Danish Ballet might sometimes regard the preservation of the rich treasure bequeathed to them by Bournonville and his disciples rather as looking after the show cases in a museum. If they should grow a little impatient and be tempted, as it were, to relegate some of the ballets to the lumber room, they would do well to regard their role more as that of the scholars who kept the ancient learning alive throughout the Dark Ages.

It is not necessary to read between the lines of Svend Kragh-Jacobsen's little book to be aware of his intense concern that the Bournonville repertoire should be preserved intact. One of the most perceptive and knowledgeable of European ballet critics, and author of an authoritative study of ballet in Denmark, he has skilfully summarised the salient events in the history of ballet in his country, and has provided the English reader with an eminently readable background to a company generally regarded in Britain as one of the finest in the world.

Kragh-Jacobsen's English has an endearing trace of "Danishness" and the book is well produced, with many interesting illustrations. D.H.

## The fountain-heads of ballet

*Des Origines du Ballet*, by Ferdinando Reyna. (Ed. Tallone, 28 Rue des Tournelles, Paris).

OVER the last 200 years ballet historians have greatly multiplied. Until now, however, few have possessed the merit of going back to the authentic sources, with the result that the same errors, the same unfounded statements have time after time been traditionally repeated. Ferdinando Reyna has taken the trouble to seek out the earliest technical treatises which still survive, whether in Italy or in France, and with the light they shed, has been able to trace more clearly than ever before the principal stages in the history of the classical dance and to refute several misconceived ideas.

Contrary to what is generally thought, ballet, he declares, owes nothing to the *Commedia dell'Arte*, nor to the dances of antiquity, which has bequeathed to us no names of steps, but only names of dances. In Italy during the 14th century, thanks to the political, social and cultural climate, the dance ceased to be a fanciful means of passing away the time and became an art in its own right. Eight works in particular bear witness to the phases, both aesthetic and technical, of this evolution.

In succession Reyna analyses the treatises of Maestro Domenico da Ferrara, musician and choreographer of the 16th century, Giovanni Ambroso da Pesaro, Guglielmo Ebreo and Antonio Cornazono. At the end of the 16th century, Fabrizio Caroso and Cesare Negri made European ballet a reality. With the assistance of Grazioso Cecchetti, son of the celebrated dancer and teacher, Ferdinando Reyna studies the steps, describing each in terms of the current academic vocabulary. Also, numerous extracts taken from descriptions of fêtes throw new light on the richness of these early spectacles.

But if ballet was born in Italy, it was in France that it developed and became enriched during the 16th and more particularly the 17th centuries, which saw the celebrated *Ballet Comique de la Reine* and the Court Ballets of Louis XIII and Louis XIV. Feuillet's work, dating from 1701, enables one to note the progress made since Cesare Negri in 1602. The French *danse noble* outstripped Italian virtuosity, and the two long competed for mastery until happily merging during the 19th century. A table explains chronologically the various stages of the different schools down to our own day, when there is only one school, the style alone varying from country to country.

This book is well illustrated, and planned with skill and clarity of thought. It has the outstanding merit of stating facts little known until now. A few remarks on the aesthetic plane judiciously set forth the author's own point of view in relation to present-day problems of this long under-valued art, as well as his opinions of the great figures of contemporary ballet. M-F.C.

## Mixed bag of endeavour

*Ballet. A Decade of Endeavour*. Edited by A. H. Franks (Burke).

THIS is one of those lucky-dip books in which many—perhaps too many—people talk about their respective contributions to the art of ballet. A. H. Franks' sanity is always refreshing and one can only wish that, apart from the very onerous task of editing the volume (I here speak with feeling), he had written more himself. The trouble is that all the subjects are dealt with, of necessity, too briefly. Many notable writers start us off on little highways and byways of thought, but there we are left before these bridle paths open out into the main thoroughfare.

The dance and dancing in England, France and America is considered by Arnold Haskell, Lillian Moore, Caryl Brahms, Irène Lidova, P. W. Manchester. The three foremost directors of British ballet tell of their difficulties. A number of critics write about the ballets they would like to see, while decor, music, films, television and criticism are also touched on. Notable is E. Kelland-Espinosa's summing up of the difficulties confronting the male dancer; amusing is Donald Wray's insight into ballet's written word. Some of the photographs are good.

For ballet clubs and those organisations which have discussion groups, here are plenty of subjects to keep you talking your heads off for many a long winter evening. P.W.

## Dancers in pictures

*Ballet 5*. Photographed by Serge Lido. Commentary by Irène Lidova. Contributions by Alicia Markova, Yvette Chauviré, Maria Tallchief (Art et Industrie, 1 bis, Rue Henri-Rochefort, Paris 17).

YET again Lido records the year in pictures. This time there are more pictures of British dancers than before: Sadler's Wells Ballet in Paris, Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet in London (not a very representative collection this), and so on. The main accent, as usual, is on French dancers, and those who have appeared in France. There is no question that these albums are other than a most valuable record of dance, their quality naturally varying according to the interest of the subjects presented. Perhaps as *Ballet 5* seems to suggest, this has been a non-vintage year. The book is nevertheless well worth having for the pictures of Svetlana Beriosova, Ashton as Carabosse, lively French artists and numerous folk-dance companies. P.W.

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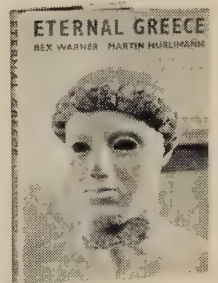
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## NEW RECORDS

Reviewed by  
DAVID HUNT

# Spanish, Russian and French

### Gypsy Magic

*Cante Jondo*. Rafaél Romero (Flamenco singer), Andrés Heredia (Flamenco guitarist), Rafaél Heredia (Flamenco dancer). London International WBV91109. 10in. 27s. 3½d.

**C**ANTE FLAMENCO, literally the song of the Gypsies (Flamingoes), is the somewhat debased, more popular form of *Cante Jondo*, or *Hondo*, the "deep" song of Spain, the origins of which are lost in antiquity. Flamenco really dates from the discovery of Spain by foreign tourists in the 19th century, while the purer *Jondo* is essentially a fusion of three distinct musical influences—Byzantine Chant, the music of the Moors, and of the Gypsies. For although the Gypsies are given most of the credit, or blame, for developing Flamenco from the older forms, from the time they first came to Spain in the 15th century, they played an equally important part in the evolution of *Jondo*, making it their own and enriching it with the impress of their proud, passionate and fatalistic, tragic emotions.

The eight superb examples of *Cante Jondo* on this record make it a worthy companion to London International TWV91051, reviewed last January, and which, although labelled *Flamenco*, consists mainly of *Jondo*.

One would have to be a singer or a guitarist and a Spaniard to find adequate means of praising the performance by Rafaél Romero and Andrés Heredia. They sound completely "possessed" by this music which, unlike compositions in the usual sense, seems to have a mystic, elemental life of its own.

A knowledge of the words is of course completely unnecessary, but each time I listen to the penultimate song, *Sevillana Biblica*, my curiosity gets the better of me: I would dearly love to know what its reference to Cleopatra and Antonio is all about.

The imperious *zapateado* of the dancer Rafaél Heredia comes through as an integral percussive component of rather more of the items than he is given credit for, and the recording brings Spain so vividly into your room that English winter is magically dispelled.

### Sacred and Profane

*Russian Folk Songs and Sacred Music*. Boris Christoff (bass), Feodor Potorjinski Russian Choir. HMV ALP1266. 12in. 36s. 5½d.

**M**AGNIFICENTLY sung by Boris Christoff with the support of a fine Russian choir, the six folk songs on the first side of this new release and the five well-chosen examples of Russian sacred music on the reverse make richly rewarding listening. Apart from the obvious connection between Russian folk-song and dance, authentic examples of which we will have the opportunity of seeing this month when the Moiseyev Ensemble comes to the Princes Theatre, the record is of particular interest to dance lovers for the inclusion of *Down Peterskaya Street*, used by Stravinsky for the Nursemaids' Dance in *Petrouchka*.

### Ballet to a Concerto

*Winter Night* (Rachmaninov; Piano Concerto No. 2 in C Minor). Leonard Pennario (piano), St. Louis Symphony Orchestra (Vladimir Golschmann). Capitol CTL7093. 12in. 36s. 5½d.

**L**eonard Pennario plays the solo part of this highly popular concerto with brilliance but his interpretation is much too hygienic by far to satisfy those who revel in Rachmaninov's introspective romanticism and rightly expect all of the music's yearning sweetness to be well to the fore, as it certainly was when translated into visual terms by Walter Gore in his ballet *Winter Night*. The recording is clear but the balance puts the orchestra too

far in the background.

Gore rehearsed his ballet to Moiseiwitsch's 78 recording of the work and which has been used by Ballet Rambert for performances on tour and rehearsals. Moiseiwitsch's tempi, unlike Pennario's, coincide with those of the composer's own recording and it is surely time that his authoritative performance was recorded for LP.

### Colourful Folk-tales

*Snegourochka Suite*. *Skazka*. (Rimsky-Korsakov). Philharmonia Orchestra (Anatole Fistoulari). Parlophone PMD1028. 10in. 24s. 6½d.

**T**HE four-movement Suite from Rimsky-Korsakov's delightful opera, *The Snow Maiden*, contains two items from the ballet music. These are the *Dance of the Birds* from the Prologue and the most famous number in the opera, the rollicking third-act *Dance of the Tumblers*, which, as staged at Sadler's Wells some years back, had exuberant choreography by de Valois. The Suite and the evocative little tone poem *Skazka* (Russian for "fairy-tale") are presented in appropriately colourful, finely shaded readings by Fistoulari, and have been well caught by the engineers.

### A Hurried Gala

*Gala Performance* (Prokofiev: Symphony No. 1 in D, Classical). *Serenade* (Tchaikovsky: Serenade in C). Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra (William Steinberg). Capitol CTL7084. 12in. 36s. 5½d.

**S**TEINBERG gets some magnificent string playing in both works, and if his tempi for the Prokofiev had not been so unorthodox this side might have made an excellent souvenir of Tudor's satirical ballet. As it is, the outer movements (and in the mind's eye, the dancers) are rushed off their feet, and the gavotte taken at an impossibly slack speed.

In the Serenade technical brilliance tends to slickness and Tchaikovsky's genial romantic warmth consequently fails to come through as it should. There are no dividing bands between the movements of the Serenade, a great inconvenience to admirers of Balanchine's ballet who will probably want occasionally to play the last two movements in the—theatrically more effective—reverse order adopted in the Ballet. Toscanini's Classical on ALP1107 and Kletzki's Serenade on 33CX1164 would be my choice.

### Devitalised Delibes

*Coppelia* (Delibes)—Selections. Royal Opera House Orchestra Covent Garden (Robert Irving). HMV CLP1046. 12 in. 32s. 4½d.

**A**LTHOUGH giving as much as almost two thirds of Delibes's complete score, this *Coppelia* release is a disappointment because of the routine nature of the performance. As the listing on the labels and sleeve is not entirely correct (not unusual in ballet music issues), it might be as well to point out what is played is as follows.

Side 1: *Mazurka* (No. 3), cut by 17 bars; *Scène* (No. 4); *Ballade de l'Epi* (No. 5); *Thème Slave Varié* (No. 6); *Czardas* (No. 7a); *Entr'acte*, including reprise of the *Swanilda Valse*; *Scène* (No. 9); *Musique des Automates* (No. 11a), cut by 52 bars; *Scène* (11b).

Side 2: *Chanson à Boire et Scène* (No. 13), final 22 bars only; *Scène et Valse de la Poupée* (No. 14), cut by 50 bars; *Scène* (No. 15), cut by 56 bars; *Boléro* (No. 16); *Gigue* (No. 17); *Marche de la Cloche* (No. 19); *Fête de la Cloche* (No. 20), complete except for *La Discorde et la Guerre* and *La Paix*.



EARLY CRANKO: Patricia Miller and Kenneth Macmillan as Mlle. Piquant and her Admirer in *Children's Corner*, John Cranko's first ballet for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet. Photo: Ian Gibson-Smith

In spite of abbreviations and omissions, this gives the cream of the score. The performance is on a level with those to which we have grown accustomed as accompaniment to the ballet as given at Covent Garden, which means, frankly, that much of the playing is shamefully inadequate. The dispirited accounts of the *Mazurka* and *Czardas*, for instance, rob them of practically all their exciting vitality and sparkle and although the poor showing put up by the solo violin in the *Ballade de l'Epi* would no doubt pass muster in a palm court, the charming music deserves worthier presentation than this.

Perhaps this orchestra nowadays consider Delibes beneath their dignity. If so, it is high time they listened to Constant Lambert's old 78 *Coppelia* recordings. The disc is well engineered.

### Debussy Toys

*Le Boîte à Joujoux*; *Children's Corner Suite*. (Debussy). Orchestre National de la Radiodiffusion Française (André Cluytens). Columbia 33CX1282. 12in. 36s. 5½d.

**D**EBUSSY finished the piano score of his children's ballet, *The Box of Toys*, in 1913, shortly after *Jeux*. Possibly as a reaction against Nijinsky's Dalcrozean choreography for *Jeux*, which he detested—"the man adds up demi-semiquavers with his feet, and proves the result with his arms"—he intended that the choreography should be extemporised by children.

Debussy died before the project could be realised and at the first production at the short-lived Théâtre Lyrique du Vaudeville in December, 1919, the parts were played by adult dancers, as was also the case in later versions by the Opéra-Comique and the Ballet Suédois.

The orchestration was completed by André Caplet, who also scored the better-known *Children's Corner* piano pieces, composed by Debussy in 1908 for the amusement of his little daughter and which John Cranko used for his ballet of the same name for Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet.

Cluytens conducts both works with all the necessary lightness and delicacy of touch and the recording is excellent.

# Nanci Pirouetted to Fame

AS was to be expected, Palladium audiences are again nightly acclaiming Nanci Crompton in the new revue *Paint The Town*, as she pirouettes almost non-stop for three minutes twenty seconds. And the strange part of it is that she is only able to do this because she was taught incorrectly. She was made to dance on her toes during her first lesson, at the age of three. So when she later went on to study under the famous American dancer Harriet Hctor, she had to go back to the beginning and start learning the basic technique at the age of eleven. She was fortunate, for the incorrect instruction did not do her any permanent injury, as it might easily have done and ruled out any possibility of a dancing career. On the contrary, it made

full use, making a speciality of solo character ballets.

When she first came over to the Palladium in 1952, she danced in a ballet sketch called *A Day In The Life Of A Secretary*. It was such a success she was asked to stay on for the next two-week season. The following year, she appeared in the Coronation Revue when her story was of a "Screen Test," and again she was asked to stay on for a further fortnight.

Crompton does not convey her characters through dancing alone. She has been learning acting almost as long as she has been learning dancing. Her mime is particularly strong.

This year, she is appearing in a sketch, with admirable choreography by George Carden, called *Nanci Goes to Town*. It closely follows her own career of the small town girl, still bewildered by the city, finding her name up in Broadway lights. She has also had a song specially composed for her by Eric Rogers called, appropriately enough, *Nanci*. But so far she has not had the chance to sing it, which is a pity, for she has also been taking singing lessons for as long as she has been learning to act.

But though it is undoubtedly the ballets which best show her technical accomplishments, it is the *pirouettes* which still capture the public's imagination, and it was *pirouettes* she had to do at the Royal Command Performance, in 1952. Hardly surprising, for she does 130 of them a minute.

Harry Stone

## Dancer in Musicals 9

her feet exceptionally strong. So Harriet Hctor took particular pains to build up her technique round this salient feature and encouraged her to concentrate on dancing on her toes.

This has had another effect on her style, besides her facility for *pirouettes*. She is also able to dance on her toes for an exceptionally long time without having to rest. She is one of the few dancers able to hold the centre of the stage, dancing on her toes the full five or six minutes without needing to be relieved by another principal. Crompton has put this ability to

# Dance and Dancers . . . AT HOME

## FESTIVAL BALLET

IF I were a dancer, I would insist on a clause in my contract under which there could never be on the stage, at the same time as myself, animals, children below the age of six, or charming old ladies above the age of 80. When any of these appear, everybody else may as well leave. The audience just dotes on them.

Dolin's mother, Maude Healey-Kay, had much publicity for her appearance in the

opening ballet—*Petrouchka*—at Festival Ballet's Sixth Anniversary Gala on September 8, so everyone was on the look out. "There she is, the dear old soul," murmured somebody sitting behind me. And there she was, tapping her way through the crowd with her stick, dressed in some old beige furs (which had nothing to do with Benois' design) and escorting her son, who looked incredibly handsome. Of course they stole the show. The programme informed me that all the stars of the com-

pany were in the crowd and that Keith Beckett danced the title role with Anita Landa as the Doll and Louis Godfrey as the Moor. I imagine they must have all been present but I would not know because, like the rest of the audience, I had eyes only for the Healey-Kays.

Of course, many other "novelties" took place besides this mother-and-son act; you can always rely on Dolin to give good value for money. Belinda Wright and John Gilpin danced the Grand Adage from

**GALA LINE-UP:** Stars of Festival Ballet and guest performers taking a call after Festival Ballet's birthday gala at Festival Hall. (L. to R.)—Polajenko, Krassovska, Gilpin, Lander, Tcherina, Belita, Rossana, Beckett, Burr and Godfrey.

**MOTHER AT THE FAIR:** Maude Healey-Kay (second from left) with her son, Anton Dolin (centre) in *Petrouchka*. Photos: Leon Ward





the third Act of *The Sleeping Beauty* in costumes of green and white which did not suit them. At the moment both lack the authority for this imperious adagio. Krasovska gave a solo called *Shemakhian*, to the *Hymn to the Sun* music from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Le Coq d'Or*, dressed in what appeared to be a copper-foil tutu. She danced extremely well though the variation itself, by Igor Schwezoff, hardly suggested the suggestiveness of the music.

A short danced revue sketch was created for Belita by Keith Lester and Leslie R. Warne to music of Don Gillis—*Room for Three*. In spite of the programme explanation—"When the show folded up I was desperate; I hadn't realised that where the theatre has no place for one, it may have room for three"—it still did not seem very intelligible. Belita, who is without any question, the greatest star on ice, was once a pupil of Dolin. This little danced scene showed, if nothing else, that should the ice ever melt, Belita could still be a great star on dry land.

Dolin followed this with his personal interpretation of Ravel's maddening, unauthentic but grotesquely popular *Boléro*, to thunderous applause. The Grand Divertissement finished with film-star Ludmilla Tcherina, partnered by Paul Goubé, in Sibelius' Finnish (no pun intended) epic—*The Swan of Tuonela*. She *bourrée*d around in a pied-swan costume, cleverly designed and beautiful to look at. Really, Ivanov and Fokine have said all that can be said about choreographic swans, and the late Edmond Audran's choreography had little further to say. However, even with their shortcomings, these bits and pieces helped to make the necessary contrast so essential to the lucky dip which is what these Grand Divertissements amount to.

The evening finished with a splendid performance of Harald Lander's *Etudes* which was really gala and proved that the home team, and Toni Lander in particular, were the unquestioned stars of the show.

### Improved productions

TWO nights later, on September 10, Festival Ballet finished their 1955 London season with *Napoli*, *Petrouchka* and *Etudes*. In *Napoli*, all the faults remarked upon earlier in the season have been ironed out by Harald Lander. The company now

**INTERNATIONAL SYLPHIDES:** Nina Vyrubova, Youly Algaroff (of the *Paris Opéra*), Hélène Constantine and Julia Farron (on ground) surrounded by Ballet Rambert Sylphides in Christian Simpson's television production of Fokine's *Les Sylphides*.

Photo: B.B.C.



**GISELLE TELEVISED:** Alicia Markova in the title role with Erik Bruhn as Albrecht and the Ballet Rambert corps de ballet as Wilis in *Giselle* Act 2. Photo: Paul Wilson

dance it very well and ex-Sadler's Wells dancer, Kenneth Melville, now dances the role of Gennaro with conviction and gusto. He has fine elevation and a handsome presence. Toni Lander as Teresina is an unceasing joy to watch.

Festival Ballet have put up a brave show throughout the season and let us hope they receive their just reward from future commitments. As the only completely unsubsidised British company, they deserve all the support they can get from a public which appears to have taken them to its heart.

P.W.

## BBC TELEVISION

### Concert Hour

Given on September 11. BBC Concert Orchestra conducted by Charles Mackerras. Produced by George R. Foa.

JULIA FARRON and DONALD BARCLAY

IT was a strange coincidence for two programmes in which ballet figured prominently to be presented on the same day. In

the first, Julia Farron and Donald Barclay collaborated with the BBC Concert Orchestra in providing a pleasant and relaxing Sunday afternoon's entertainment.

The programme opened with Strauss's *Voices of Spring* waltz, in which Julia Farron danced in a long white romantic costume against a background of an avenue of trees.

The producers were fortunate in having the services of Julia Farron, for it was only at the last minute that she had to cancel her flight to the United States with the remainder of the Sadler's Wells Ballet. It was a pity that the rest of the company could not have seen her execute the *Polka* in Frederick Ashton's *Façade*. For at long last the dance was given some style and characterisation and invested with an air of gaiety and pertness, all of which has long eluded various interpreters of the role both at Covent Garden and at Sadler's Wells. The dancer was also given a costume far more akin to the original design than we nowadays see.

Two excerpts from Offenbach followed—a selection of music from *La Vie Parisienne* and *La Belle Hélène*. This was succeeded by a hornpipe from Edward German's *Merrie England*, to which Donald Barclay performed, in a lusty nautical style, a short solo devised by Margaret Dale. He wore a polo-necked sweater and there was a well-designed backcloth of a naval dockyard.

Margaret Dale was also the choreographer of an excellent solo danced by Julia Farron to Arthur Benjamin's *Jamaican Rumba*. In a costume which would have done justice to Carmen Miranda, Farron performed to perfection a dance largely restricted to movements of the hip and waist.

### Giselle Act 2

Given on September 11. Introduced by Jill Balcon. Music by Adam. Choreography by Coralli. Orchestra conducted by Eric Robinson. Designed by Stephen Taylor. Produced by Philip Bate.

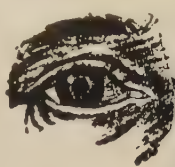
*Giselle* — — — ALICIA MARKOVA  
*Albrecht* — — — ERIK BRUHN  
*Queen of the Wilis* — — ANN HORN  
*Hilarion* — — — NORMAN DIXON  
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This performance was important for it was the first time that Erik Bruhn of the Royal Danish Ballet had appeared in the role of Albrecht. The dancers' performances received a tremendous ovation; now, with the *corps de ballet* of the Ballet Rambert, they were to repeat their triumph on the British television screen; although this time they were to do only the second Act.

The programme began with a short synopsis of the scenario, well told by Jill Balcon. The opening shots of the ballet itself were perfect; the designer had created a woodland glade with leafy trees disappearing into the distance, all shown to good advantage by skilful lighting.

Markova's performance was perhaps as near to perfection as will ever be realised. One of the most poignant passages was her pleading for Albrecht's life with the Queen of the Wilis.

Erik Bruhn's was a masterly performance; for its maturity one could have easily assumed that he was no stranger to the role. In the true style of a Bournonville dancer his elevation was breathtaking, and in this production the cameras did not fail to emphasise it. His partnering was steady and reliable throughout.

As Myrthe, the Queen of the Wilis, Ann Horn gave a splendid performance. She was an ideal contrast to the ethereal quality of Markova, for she was dominating, and

harsh. Hers was perhaps the manner more of a sergeant-major than of a Queen.

Marie Rambert provided a *corps de ballet* who worthily supported the principals.

The camera-work and the lighting were excellent and there were some imaginatively-contrived aerial shots of the *corps de ballet*.

### Les Sylphides

Given on September 25. Designed by Norman James. Orchestra of the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, conducted by John Hollingsworth. Production under the direction of Marie Rambert. Produced by Christian Simpson.

A ballet by Fokine to the music of Chopin.

NINA VYROUBOVA YOLLY ALGAROFF  
JULIA FARRON  
HELENE CONSTANTINE  
and

The *Corps de Ballet* of the Ballet Rambert. CHRISTIAN SIMPSON gathered an international cast for his presentation of *Les Sylphides*: Nina Vyroubova and Yolly Algaroff from Paris, Julia Farron of the Sadlers Wells Ballet, Hélène Constantine from the United States, and Marie Rambert's "television" *corps de ballet*.

Nina Vyroubova, the *Première Danseuse Etoile*, of the Paris Opéra Ballet, possesses most of the qualities which constitute the embodiment of a true Fokine dancer. She has a graceful lyrical style, a beautiful line and lovely feet.

Her air of romantic melancholy, the ethereal quality of her movement, all things combined to make her seem the visual embodiment of the music of Chopin. Yolly Algaroff, her partner and countryman, is a handsome dancer and the possessor of an easy, graceful style which seems almost effortless. Yet there is something missing: while appreciating his dancing, one is seldom moved to applaud it. His partnering was steady, but in his solo in the finale there was a definite lack of finish to his dancing, especially noticeable in his *cabrioles en arabesque*.

Julia Farron's performance in the *Prelude* was highly commendable, even more so when one considers that as a dancer she is perhaps temperamentally unsuited to the role.

Hélène Constantine is a very fine dancer when correctly cast. She was part of the backbone of Roland Petit's last company, but here she was completely at sea with the lyricism of Fokine. In the *Valse*, so graceless was her style that she might well have been appearing in another ballet.

The camerawork was on the whole excellent. The floor patterns were imaginatively shown and the opening shots of the ballet were some of the most beautiful I have seen on a television screen.

Once again Christian Simpson has proved that in the field of ballet, he reigns supreme at Lime Grove.

Nicholas Baker

## Dance and Dancers

### FRANCE

WHILE the great companies deserted the capital and the Opéra's doors were shut, Paris welcomed three young troupes of varying quality, but which bear witness to the vitality of French ballet.

#### Ballet Modernes de Paris

THE Ballets Modernes de Paris, seen at the Marigny Theatre from September 5 to 17, has only recently been formed by Françoise and Dominique. At the moment this group shows only too clearly lack of

TO MUSIQUE CONCRETE: Maurice Béjart and Michèle Seigneuret in the former's *Symphonie pour un Homme Seul* for Ballets de l'Etoile. Photo: Lido

experience and insufficient technique, there is little enough originality in the dull choreography and the ideas behind the ballets are generally either banal or pretentious and confused. They have, however, the taste to choose interesting and danceable scores, such as Milhaud's *Suite Française* and music by Jean-Michel Damase.

#### Ballets de l'Etoile

AS last year, Maurice Béjart's young company chose the summer season to present an intelligently composed programme at the Théâtre de l'Etoile. The

BALLET IN REHEARSAL: Claire Sombert with Pierre Lacotte in his ballet *La Nuit est une Sorcière*, recently given by Ballets de la Tour Eiffel. Photo: Lido

## ABROAD

merit of the season lay in the simplicity and creative imagination shown by Maurice Béjart and Dick Sanders.

The most original work was certainly *Symphonie pour un Homme Seul*, conceived and interpreted by Béjart to the *Musique Concrète* of Pierre Schaeffer and Pierre Henry. A typical work of *Musique Concrète*, composed of various sounds recorded, modulated and intensified by mechanical means, Pierre Schaeffer explains this symphony of solitude in these words: "What orchestra can express the cry which man in his solitude does not succeed in uttering?"



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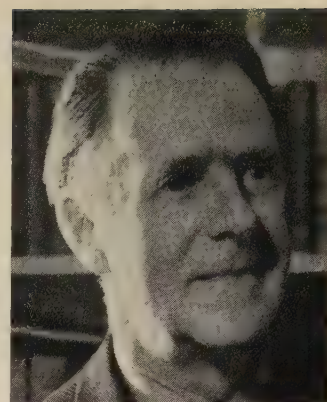
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Faithful to these indications, Béjart gives an expressive study of isolation. Shadows press in around him, activated by noises too strident for my ears, or whispered murmurs. A figure detaches itself—the Woman, played with savage intensity by Michèle Seigneuret, a morbid, egotistical love unable to release the tortured man from his inhuman anguish. By its brutality, its rigid co-ordination of gesture and sound, this curious and haunting work will doubtless have no rival.

*Le Voyage au Cœur d'un Enfant*, arranged to *Musique Concrète* by Maurice Henry, is a little inferior. But Maurice Béjart has with much skill and discretion managed to adapt the story of Oedipus, a Freudian theme which accentuates the affinities between his style and German Expressionism and Martha Graham's work. Michèle Seigneuret and Michel Hogan and Patrick Beldam gave worthy interpretations but the audience's nerves were again sorely tried by the unpredictable succession of strident noises.

Alternating with these ballets are more easily understood works, such as Dick Sanders' *Récréation*, to Kabalevsky music, which, in the manner of *Interplay*, includes several amusing turns of invention in its joyous flow. Joan Cadzow portrays with authority *La Mère Apprivoisée* (*The Taming of the Shrew*), arranged by Béjart to music by Scarlatti, with decor by Alwynn.

Bjorn Holmgren's choreography for *Variations* (Brahms) is of debatable value and unfortunately shows up the young dancers' technical weaknesses. Béjart's *La Belle au Bo*, to Rossini music, is a humorous parody of the *Rose Adage* in which Tessa Beaumont is capricious and charming as the beauty, and Marie-Claire a comic soubrette.

### Ballets de la Tour Eiffel

TWO fugitives from the Opéra, Pierre Lacotte and Josette Clavier, have just founded the *Ballets de la Tour Eiffel*. After making its début at Aix-les-Bains, the new company came to the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées. Thus, nearly 10 years later, the question is asked, will the young dancers follow the same course, with the same enthusiasm, if not with the same means, as their elders, Roland Petit, Renée Jeanmaire and Jean Babilée? One can only wish them the same success.

Unfortunately the composition of the little company underlines the lack of soloists. In fact the already well-known classical mastery of Josette Clavier and Pierre Lacotte isolates them from the inexperienced *Corps de ballet*. Also Pierre Lacotte has done all the choreography himself and his three works betray something of the intensive toil which he must have put into them. A certain plastic monotony is felt which he could easily have avoided by limiting his contribution to one or two ballets.

In his disdain for classicism, Pierre Lacotte has exclusively sought his inspiration in jazz. He has learnt from Jerome Robbins and Roland Petit, but lacks their dynamic originality and also their sense of theatre. His youth and good intentions will doubtless enable him to remedy these defects.

The divertissement *Solstice* is built around the pleasures and joys of a band of boys and girls against a fine geometrical setting by Clayette. There are some interesting, but too precipitate, moments. The *adage* of the lovers is transformed, under the influence of a nervous acceleration, into an angular, Machiavellian *allegretto*. Too often a systematic seeking after effect masks ingenious ideas.

*La Nuit est une Sorcière* owes its success to Sydney Bechet's score as well as to the fantastic attic designed by Bernard Daydé. The theme of this study in good and evil remains confused. Free movement often replaces dance steps. A former dancer of the Katherine Dunham Company, Arthur Bell, as Evil, lacks perverseness and savagery.

Finally, Josette Clavier gives a fresh rendering of *La Grosse de Paris* against a graceful set by Jacques de Pindray. A large part of this long trifle could have been omitted.

One can only welcome the dynamism and courage of this young company, while counselling Pierre Lacotte to make use of other choreographers, such as his ballet-master Dick Sanders. Simplification and relaxation will bring to his personal inspiration what it lacks—flow and effectiveness. They will also enable him to show off to better effect the piquant charm and assured technique of his partner Josette Clavier.

Marie-Françoise Christout

## AMERICA

### Return of the Sadler's Wells

THE major event in America has been the triumphant return of the Sadler's Wells Ballet for its fourth visit to this country. Despite the unseasonably warm and humid weather, their Gala Premiere on September 11 at the Metropolitan Opera House with *The Sleeping Beauty* was notable in every way. As usual, the house was sold out, with rows of spectators standing at the back, and the upped price of orchestra and box seats for opening night accounted for some \$19,995, the company's biggest receipts to date. During its first week, the box office takings were in excess of \$94,000, bringing the proceeds for the first full week to \$114,000.

*The Sleeping Beauty* was the perfect choice for the first night and it was a performance memorable in every way. Margot Fonteyn gave a magical performance. Beryl Grey, back in America after a five-year absence, received a small ovation on her entrance, and was magnificent as the

PICTURE AT AN EXHIBITION: Beryl Grey and Philip Chatfield visit our American correspondent, Arthur Todd (left), at the exhibition he organised on the Sadler's Wells Ballet in the Dance Alcove in the 58th Street Music Library in New York.

Photo:

Jack Mitchell



ARRIVAL IN NEW YORK: Dame Ninette de Valois is greeted at the airport by impresario Sol Hurok who is managing the Sadler's Wells Ballet's American tour. Photo: B.O.A.C.

Lilac Fairy. Michael Somes made a handsome and commanding Prince and Frederick Ashton was at the top of his form as Carabosse. The biggest individual applause of the evening, however, went to Rowena Jackson and Brian Shaw for their *Blue Bird* Pas de Deux. Subsequent performances during the first week saw Violetta Elvin, Svetlana Beriosova and Nadia Nerina in the name role. During the first two weeks of its five-week New York season, the company premiered *Scènes de Ballet*, *The Lady and the Fool*, *Rinaldo and Armida*, *The Firebird*, the new production of *Coppelia* and *Tiresias*.

### Tribulations of Tiresias

THUS far, in my opinion, *Tiresias* has been the major news of the season. It emerges as a work of art comparable to Ashton's superb *Daphnis and Chloe*. It must be added at once, however, that this ballet has been extremely controversial, with critical opinion sharply and strongly divided. John Martin, of *The New York Times*, hailed it as "a modern, profoundly creative and altogether extraordinary ballet, danced superbly and produced to perfection", and added, "it is as great a work as Ashton has ever accomplished". On the other hand, Walter Terry of the *New York Herald Tribune* found *Tiresias* "little but





OFF TO NEW YORK: The Panamanian Ambassador to London, Dr. Arias, leaves for New York with his wife, Margot Fonteyn. She has had an even greater triumph at the Metropolitan Opera House than in previous seasons.

Photo: B.O.A.C.

pictorial pomp and practically no circumstance at all". *Time Magazine* found the ballet "disastrously pretentious, a complex, often embarrassing brouhaha of heavy symbolism, mythology and sex". *Newsweek* spoke of "its dated, 'modern' score and weak choreography"; and Winthrop Sargeant, writing in *The New Yorker*, found it "a lot of symbolic spear-waving choreography that looked like an imitation of what the Denishawn dancers used to do here 30 years ago." Nevertheless, the work has continued to find more strong adherents at every performance and John Martin has devoted an entire Sunday column to extolling its virtues again.

What remains consistently amazing about *Tiresias* is the fact that such a modern work could be danced so superbly by a company that so many consider purely classical and academic in outlook and train-

ing. Constant Lambert's score is a fascinating composition, full of richness and atmosphere and Isabel Lambert's scenery and costumes are not only strikingly beautiful in form and colour, but are also wonderfully in style and keeping with the score and the dance movements devised by Ashton.

As far as New York is concerned, the role of the female *Tiresias* gave Violetta Elvin the richest role of her career and she has been nothing short of superb in it. The same holds true for Michael Somes, who, incidentally, has been dancing better than ever all during the season. Certainly this is one of the most important dance works to be seen in America in the past two or three years and it is one that will remain hauntingly alive and memorable in seasons to come.

### Most authentic Fokine revival

*The Firebird*, which was also expected to cause some little controversy, was hailed by John Martin as "as true and authentic a revival of any Fokine work as we are likely to see in our time". For many of the rest of us, however, this beautifully mounted revival seemed definitely a period piece with some of the group patterns appearing ponderous and over-extended. Perhaps this is unnecessary carping, though, in view of Fonteyn's beautiful and flashing *Firebird*. There was excellent support from Michael Somes and the lovely and always interesting Svetlana Beriosova.

These latter two danced beautifully together earlier the same evening in the premiere of Ashton's *Rinaldo and Armida*. Though this is not one of this choreographer's major works, it is replete with inventive movement and is rich in the emotional awareness that Ashton always is able to create between his characters. Somes also appeared in *Tiresias* the same evening and it was indeed a rewarding experience to see him in three such dissimilar roles in one evening. Always admired in this country, it is markedly evident this season that he has matured now as a major artist and he has been dancing at top form thus far this season.

Another Ashton work, *Scènes de Ballet*, was considerably more successful. Though

not the greatest Stravinsky score extant, its choreography is beautifully designed and constructed. Visually it was a delight to see since its Beaurepaire setting seems so closely related to Ashton's spatial patterns. Rowena Jackson and David Blair danced the leads following the initial performance which was headed by Nadia Nerina and Brian Shaw.

### Too long at the ball

THOUGH the majority of the New York press found John Cranko's *The Lady and the Fool* twice too long, it must be added at once that there is much in this work that is admirable. There is an abundant opportunity for dance purely for the sake of dance and New York audiences have received this work far more favourably than the critics. It has been a major pleasure to watch Beryl Grey move and dance so beautifully through this ballet. Finally, this work is important if for no other reason than that it has served as an important vehicle for Phillip Chatfield. Although a great many of us have become more and more aware of Chatfield's gifts (his dancing in the Florestan *Pas de Trois* opening night was memorable), his dancing and mime as Moondog were deeply moving and beautifully executed. Here, certainly, is one of the company's future leading dancers.

Arthur Todd

The remainder of the season will be reviewed next month.

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Dec.  
1-4 Masonic Temple, Detroit  
5-12 Rehearsing in New York for one television performance of *The Sleeping Beauty*  
13-15 Maple Leaf Gardens, Toronto  
31 Royal Opera House, Covent Garden, London.

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Oct.  
17 Grand Theatre, Leeds.  
24 King's Theatre, Edinburgh  
31 Theatre Royal, Glasgow  
Nov.  
7 His Majesty's Theatre, Aberdeen.  
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Dec.  
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### Ballet Correspondents

(Abbreviations: b.c.—ballet correspondence; m.—male; f.—female; m.a.—my age; o.i.—other interests; ls.—languages; p.r.—photograph requested).

ROSALIND RAYSON, Cone-Ripman College, Tring Park, Tring Herts., wants b.c., m. age 18-23. m.a. 18. o.i. theatre, music, art, photography, etc. all answered.

THELMA FOALE, Cone-Ripman College, Tring Park, Tring, Herts., wants b.c., m., age 18-23. m.a. 18. o.i. music, reading, theatre, travel, etc. all answered.

MARGARET PATCHETT, 133, Lincoln Road, North Hykeham, Lincoln, wants b.c., f., age 15-17, in U.S.A. only. m.a. 15. o.i. films, dress designing, sport, music.

SHIRLEY HOUGHTON, 7, Rosebery Crescent, Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne, wants b.c. m.a. 19. o.i. music, theatre, cinema. ls. French. p.r.

DIANA THACKWELL, 47, Rayburn Avenue, Christchurch, N.W.2., New Zealand, wants b.c., m. or f., age 13-15. m.a. 13½. o.i. music, singing, reading, films. all answered.

GUY LANCASTRE, Av. Visconde Valmor, 47-48-Esq., Lisbon, wants b.c., m. or f. m.a. 23. o.i. music, reading, art, etc. ls. Portuguese, English, French, Spanish, Swedish, some Italian and German. all answered.

MARY PHELPS, 1226, 51 Avenue, Oakland, California, U.S.A., wants b.c., m. or f., age 18-34, esp. Spain, England, S. America. m.a. 20. o.i. Spanish dancing, bullfights, films. ls. Spanish, Portuguese.

DOROTHY WILCOCK, 119, St. James Rd., Blackburn, Lancs., wants b.c., m. m.a. 16. o.i. films, sport. p.r.

ALAN C. KERSHAW, "Tyrone," New Walk Terrace, York, wants b.c., m.

age 20-30. m.a. 21. o.i. theatre, music, sport, travel. p.r.

RON HONEYBUL, 19, Station Crescent, Sudbury Town, Wembley, Middx., wants b.c., m. m.a. 35. o.i. art.

BOB TERRILL, 2040, Sherman Avenue, Evanston, Illinois, U.S.A., wants b.c. (esp. dance students). m.a. 19. o.i. modern dance, opera, music, literature.

### LOOK FOR

## The Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet Cover

on the December number of Dance and Dancers

Also in this Christmas number will be *Calling all Countries*, greetings and reports from British choreographers and dancers working abroad. *Credits and Discredits of 1955*. *Dancer of the Year*. Pictures and reviews of new ballets given by the London Ballet Circle (including new works by John Cranko and Peter Darrell), and of *Suadades*, Rodrigues' new ballet for the Sadler's Wells Theatre Ballet.

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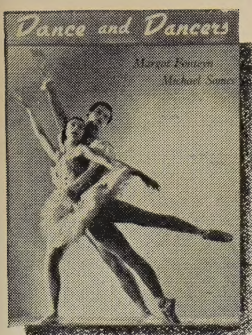
Pictures and reviews of the first London visit of the Classical Theatre of China and the Moiseyev Ensemble from Moscow. Pictures and stories of the new dances presented by the Pilar Lopez Ballet Espanol.

All the usual features and many new ones of topical interest.

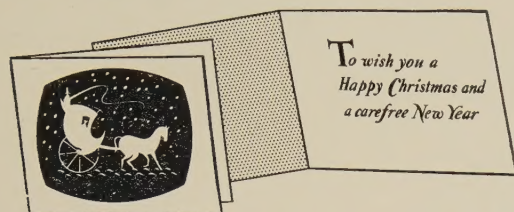
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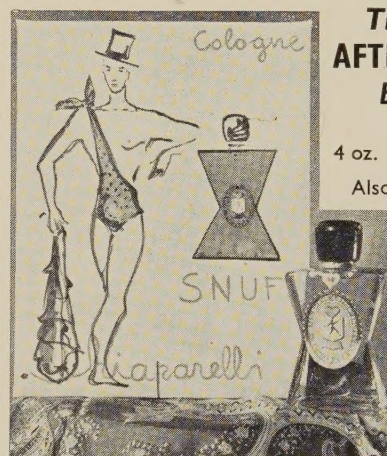


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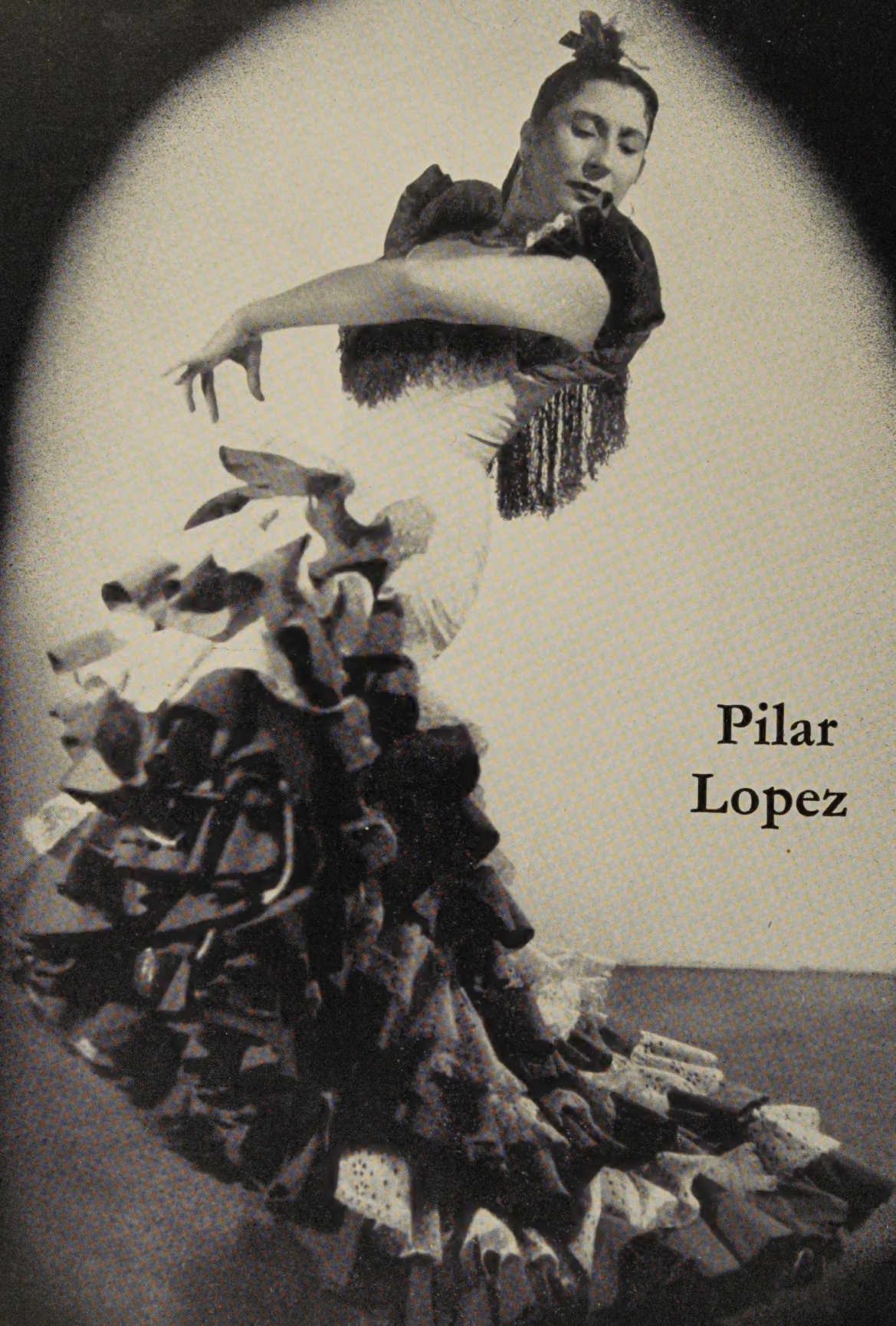


This month's full ballet guide

# *Dance and Dancers*

NOVEMBER 1955

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Pilar  
Lopez